BEST NEW WAY TO BLOCK MALWARE

Free tool that spots danger before your antivirus - p54

WebUser

Issue 349

16 July 2014

• Best software • New apps • Expert tips

GREAT £2 VALUE

CHANGE YOUR SETTINGS NOW!

REMOVE HIDDEN JUNK FROM YOUR PHONE & TABLET

✓ More space ✓ More speed ✓ Longer battery
✓ No spyware - page 38

PLUS

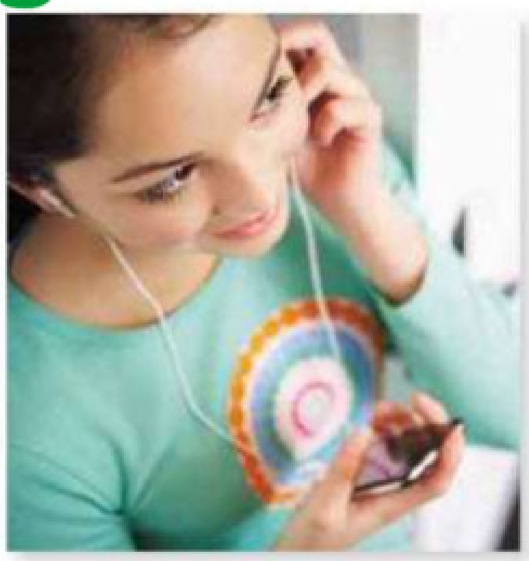
GOOGLE GLASS TESTED

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Homepage

Get thinner, faster and smarter

How often do you check the Downloads folder on your phone or tablet? If you're anything like me, the answer will be "never" or "there's a Downloads folder?", and it's probably chock-a-block with things you'd forgotten you downloaded. When I looked in my folder recently, there were so many PDF restaurant menus you'd think I was either a professional food critic or a compulsive eater.

In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we explain how to give your mobile device a thorough spring (well, summer) clean to make it faster, tidier and safer. This includes removing apps you never use, files that take up too much space and data that could compromise your privacy.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your feedback about our new look, which has been reassuringly positive. Please don't hesitate to let me know if there's anything else you'd like to see more or less of in *Web User*, so we can continue to improve the magazine.

Robert Irvine
robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk
#webuser



ISSUE 349 16 JULY 2014 ON THE COVER



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2 How to install extensions that have been removed from the Chrome Web Store **page 30**

3 How to edit videos from anywhere without needing to download any software **page 44**

4 How to combine two competing online services to make everyday tasks easier **page 46**

5 How to control up to four computers using a single mouse and keyboard **page 69**

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PRINTING
Printed by Polestar Bicester, Oxon
Distributors Seymour 020 7396 4000

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What's New Online

Play Google Maps game Smarty Pins

There are lots of quizzes online that test your geographical knowledge, but few are as fun as Google's new Smarty Pins. To answer the question, you have to drop the pin on the correct location. You start off with 1,000 miles in the bank, but you'll lose them the further your answer is from the correct location – though you'll win bonus miles if you answer quickly. Get it right and Google will congratulate you in typically quirky style ("put on a banana suit and celebrate"). It mocks you when you're (literally) miles out: "Well, at least you got the planet right".

Google eases you into the game at the opening Bronze level by starting you near where the pin should go and, if you get stuck, you can click the 'Take a hint' button – "Home of the Cockney" is the clue for a question about London. You can also choose from a list of Trivial Pursuit-style categories, including Arts & Culture and Science & Geography, or pick Featured Topics, which asks questions based on current events – it was the World Cup when we played the game.

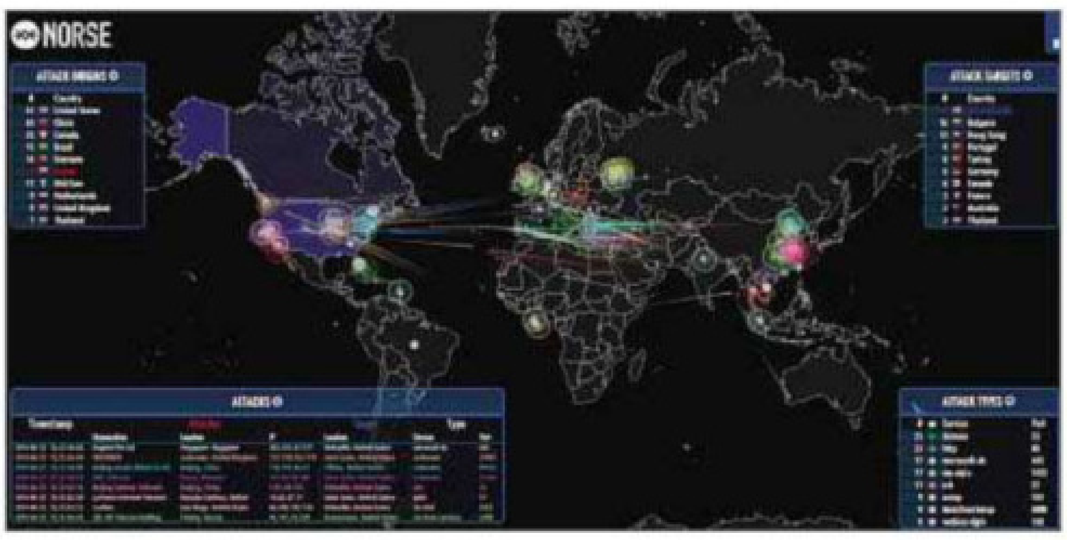
smartypins.withgoogle.com



Watch cyberattacks in real time

map.ipviking.com

This fascinating but slightly terrifying map shows you exactly where cyberattacks are taking place around the world in real time. Streaks of different colours signify the type of threat, and boxes show which countries are launching the attacks, and which are being targeted. Once you've watched the map for several minutes, you'll soon spot the main trend, which is China bombarding the US with attacks. The map, designed to work best in Chrome, was created by St Louis-based security company Norse, which uses a worldwide 'honeypot' – a deliberately vulnerable network – to attract cyberattacks.



Watch Morph on YouTube



www.youtube.com/MorphOfficial

It has been 37 years since he first appeared on our screens, but Morph is back – this time on the internet. Aardman Animations, creators of Wallace and Gromit, has made a series of 15 one-minute episodes for YouTube, starting with *Twin Decks,* in which Morph and his pal Chas try out their DJ skills.

Aardman resurrected Morph after a mere 2,654 fans with a little more spare change than most donated £110,000 on Kickstarter (bit.ly/kickmorph349). You can follow Morph on Twitter to find out when new episodes are ready to watch (@AmazingMorph).

Also new is a fun official site (amazingmorph.com), which has lots of old episodes – including the first ever from 1977, featuring a much podgier Morph – and some 'making of' clips. You can download Morph wallpaper from the site and buy merchandise, including mugs, T-shirts and Morph It, the "squishy, squashy dough-modelling game".

We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

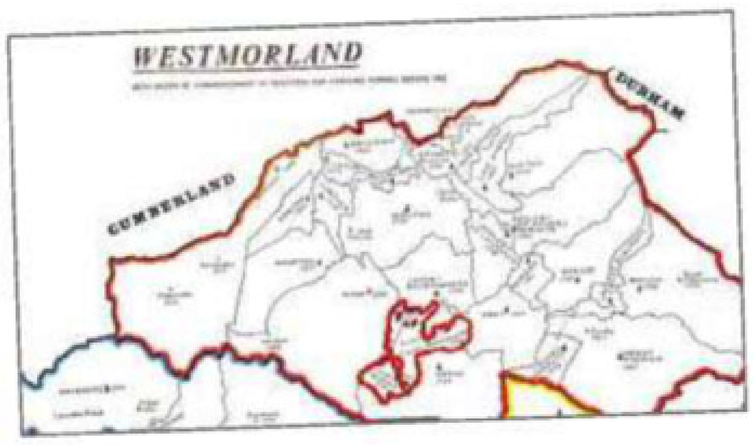
Watch bears live on Alaska webcam

bit.ly/bear349

Back for a third year is the Brown Bear & Salmon webcam, broadcasting five views live from Brooks River in Alaska's Katmai National Park and Preserve, which at nearly five million acres is slightly smaller than Wales. Until autumn, you'll be able to watch the skilful bears go fishing.



Explore 500-year-old UK county maps



bit.ly/countymap348

Ancestry.co.uk members can see how county and parish boundaries have changed shape over the centuries in the site's new collection of zoomable maps. You need to be a Premium member to use it. You start by selecting England, Scotland or Wales under 'Browse this collection' at the top right, then choose from the list of counties. Now-vanished counties Huntingdonshire and Westmorland (see our screengrab) are included.

See World War One trench maps

bit.ly/maps349

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War One, you can see where in modern-day Europe the trenches of the Western Front lay by viewing more than 130 maps published online by The National Library of Scotland. These zoomable maps, made between 1915 and 1918, are placed on top of internet maps from Google, Bing and the Ordnance Survey. Turn to page 48 for more websites covering the centenary of World War One.



Watch lightning strikes around the world

www.blitzortung.org

If you can speak German, you'll know that the name of this website – Blitzortung – means 'lightning locating'. And that's exactly what it does, mapping lightning strikes around the world. Volunteers use radio frequency antennae to track electromagnetic discharges given off by lightning. The colour of the dots shows how old the strike is, from 20 to 120 minutes.



5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@PenguinUKBooks
Competitions, offers, new releases and witty book chat

@terry_wogan
Photos of musicians playing sessions on Sir Terry's Radio 2 show

@Glasgow2014
Follow events from the Commonwealth Games via the official account

@SwiftKey
Tips, updates and technical help from the Android keyboard that won our Group Test in Issue 348

@freakonomics
Intriguing insights from the pair behind the *Freakonomics* books

View street art in Google

bit.ly/street349

Street art is celebrated in this new project from the Google Cultural Institute, with more than 5,000 images. including plenty of work by Banksy, such as the one at bit.ly/banksy349, which is just around the corner from *Web User*'s office.

Play 8-bit Star Trek game

www.pixeltrek.com

Explore the USS Enterprise-D (from *The Next Generation*) as Lieutenant Data in this blocky 8-bit simulation of the ship. Look out for Data's cat, Spot.

Build a cardboard virtual-reality headset

developers.google.com/cardboard

A cardboard virtual-reality headset sounds like one of Google's April Fools' jokes, but it can be built by following instructions, though you'll need lenses, velcro and magnets. Still, it's an intriguing glimpse at what might be on sale soon.

Need to Know

Google accused of undermining "right to be forgotten"



What happened?

Google has been criticised for trying to undermine the EU's so-called "right to be forgotten" rule after removing links from its results and then subsequently reinstating them.

As we reported in our 'Remove yourself from Google' feature in Issue 347, the EU ruled back in May that Google had to remove links to a news story about a Spanish man's financial difficulties from 16 years ago. That ruling means the search giant is now expected to do the same for anyone who asks for links from outdated and inaccurate web pages to be removed.



Google quickly set up a semi-automated system, whereby anyone in Europe can fill in a form to request results be cleaned up – or, as some would say, censored. However, some journalists have accused it of trying to undermine the ruling.

First, Google said it would note on results pages if a link had been removed, which is what it does for links taken down for copyright infringement. But by highlighting the removed URLs, it rather undermined the "right to be forgotten". Instead, Google is now showing a generic message on all search-results pages for names: enter your name into the search engine, and it will warn that "some results may have been removed under data protection law in Europe" – whether or not any results have been removed.

Google's second move was to start 'delinking' items in search results. Rather than quietly remove the URLs with no fuss, it sent emails to journalists and publishers to alert them that their stories were being 'delinked'. Naturally, those journalists wrote about it, which again highlighted the stories that people were trying to have "forgotten". Following these complaints, Google reinstated many of the links.

How will it affect you?

It's important to bear in mind that, contrary to many reports, Google isn't actually removing online content; it's simply ensuring that links to it no longer appear in the search results for certain names. Additionally, the "right to be forgotten" only applies to EU searches, so results will still be present through Google.com, which is easy to switch to.

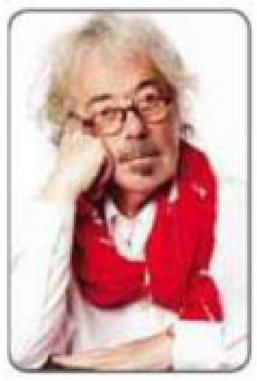
If you want to have a link removed from a search result, you can fill in the form at bit.ly/remove349. You'll need to upload ID to prove who you are, and give a reason why the link in question should be removed. Google doesn't have to remove the link, and it can ask for a court decision before doing so.

What do we think?

What a mess. Google admits that it's struggled to interpret the rules, and that it is "learning as it goes". It's hard to believe that the company isn't deliberately fumbling attempts to "forget" users, but then again, what exactly did the EU expect to happen? So far, 70,000 people have asked to be "forgotten". If all of them went through the courts and made a judge decide the outcome, it would take years, cost millions and the cases would more likely highlight the attention rather than make these individuals more anonymous, which seems like a huge waste of effort.

There needs to be some way for people to ask Google to remove inaccurate or irrelevant listings, but as long as the EU and Google are working at cross-purposes, we don't expect that to happen anytime soon.

FELIX DENNIS, founder and Chairman of Dennis Publishing, the company that publishes *Web User*, *Auto Express* and *The Week*, died on June 22nd 2014. He was 67.



Felix lived a remarkable life. From modest beginnings he created one of the UK's most successful magazine publishing businesses, achieving worldwide recognition for his contribution to media and establishing himself as one of Britain's best-loved entrepreneurs. He also enjoyed huge success as a critically acclaimed poet and in 1992 established the Heart Of England Forest Project charity. His considerable fortune will continue to help the charity achieve its aim of planting a 25,000-acre native broadleaf forest in the Warwickshire countryside, details of which can be found at www.heartofenglandforest.com.

But above all, Felix was an immensely gifted publisher. His obsession with high-quality content, allied closely to an ability to identify what readers really wanted, set him apart as the finest magazine craftsman of his generation. He will be greatly missed.

What we think of this fortnight's top tech news stories and rumours, and how they affect you

ISP parental controls block one in five websites

What happened?



The parental-control filters provided by ISPs are preventing access to as many as a fifth of all websites, according to digital rights activists at the Open Rights Group (ORG), which has tested more than 100,000 sites.

The filters are designed to block websites that are unsuitable for children, but the group is suggesting that they're incorrectly labelling pages. Indeed, ORG highlighted a car salesman's website, a political blog and a page about post-natal care as being unfairly blocked.

UK ISPs were forced to introduce parental controls by the government, but as yet there is no clear way for websites to appeal against unfair blocking. Many of the sites aren't actually blocked as pornography, but as social networking. This is one of the main categories that parents can block, and in many filters it includes popular blogging platforms, which means a wide range of innocuous topics are barred.

How will it affect you?

If you're using your ISP's filter, and find it is blocking too many websites, double check your settings: if you don't need them on the highest level, reduce the severity of the block.

Some parental-control systems allow you to whitelist specific URLs, so they are allowed through, and ISPs say you can report a site that you feel shouldn't be blocked and have it reassessed, but the process differs for each provider. Otherwise, you'll need to turn the filter off to access the site in question, which will temporarily undo the protection that the parental controls offer. If you want to check if a site is blocked by such filters, you can do so at the ORG's Blocked website (www.blocked.org.uk).

What do we think?

Overblocking was always going to be a problem with parental-control filters. If the situation is as bad as ORG's research suggests, and if ISPs continue to make it difficult to tackle the problem, it's likely that people will simply switch off the filters, making them a waste of time and money. There are government plans in the works to address the overblocking problem, but there seems to be less urgency surrounding them than there was for the filters to be installed in the first place.

Facebook investigated over secret study

What happened?

Facebook manipulated users' news feeds to see how they responded to positive and negative posts. The study, conducted two years ago, has been criticised, because the researchers and Facebook didn't ask for users' consent.

Facebook apologised but it could still face a fine of up to £500,000 from The Information Commissioner's Office.

How will it affect you?

If you were one of the 700,000 unwitting participants in the study, Facebook will have promoted negative or positive posts in your feed, then monitored your reactions. The study would only have affected "top stories" in your news feed.

What do we think?

It's unlikely this study caused genuine distress to Facebook users, but it has once again displayed a cavalier attitude towards user data. Facebook could easily have asked users if they wanted to participate.



FIRST LOOK

Google Glass

www.google.com/glass



Google Glass was only available in the US until recently, but it can now be bought in the UK via the Glass Explorer Programme for £1,000. Unlike the earliest version of the product, you can now choose from a variety of frames, all of which can take prescription lenses or plain glass. Previously, if you wanted prescription lenses, you would have needed to buy contact lenses, because there was no way of wearing Glass in conjunction with normal eyewear. As such, the new frames mark a significant step forward, both in terms of practicality and comfort, and we think they look better, too.

Wearing Glass for the first time nonetheless feels slightly odd, because you need to look upwards to see the device's small transparent screen. Although its 640 x 320 resolution sounds far from impressive compared to the displays of today's smartphones and tablets, the screen's much smaller size means that it



actually has a very high pixel density and produces sharp, detailed images.

You can control Glass either using your voice or the touchpad on its side, and we were largely impressed with the voice control when we used it in conjunction with the device's Navigation app. The control pad responds to directional swipes and a single tap to select, and although we found this a little tricky to begin with, it quite quickly became second nature.



All the apps on Glass have been specially written for it in order to make effective use of its screen and controls, and perhaps the most impressive of them all is the Navigation app. Google Maps has been cleverly formatted for the small screen and, thanks to the device's built-in GPS, accelerometer, compass and gyroscope, it's very easy to confirm which direction you are facing by simply moving your head and watching the maps rotate. The app gives you walking, cycling or driving directions, but you are almost certain to be banned from driving and wearing Google Glass in the UK. The Department of Transport has made its feelings against the potential risks well known.

> "It's worth waiting for its price to come down before buying"

Glass also has a handy auto-translation tool called Word Lens that uses the device's camera to translate whatever's in front of you. We can see this being particularly handy when trying to read a menu or a sign abroad. Since Glass runs Android 4.4.2, it lets you do most of the things you'd normally expect to be able to do on an Android device, including reading or sending emails and receiving event notifications. You can also use Glass' voice control to take a photo or shoot video at any time, but its 5-megapixel sensor and 720p video resolution are somewhat mediocre compared to today's top-end smartphones.

One major shortcoming of Google Glass is that, despite being well-connected via Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and microUSB, it does not have a data connection of its own. Therefore, to make effective use of its best features when you're out and about, you need to tether it to your smartphone, meaning that you'll be eating into the battery life of both devices.

Since Glass is still in beta and does not have very many apps, we think it's worth waiting for its price to come down before buying. It's undoubtedly an exciting product, but debates surrounding the privacy implications of wearing a camera on your face remain rife, and Android Wear (www.android.com/wear) is capable of doing many of the same things as Glass for a fraction of the price.



WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Microsoft developing a wearable fitness band?



The wearable device Microsoft is rumoured to be releasing this autumn could be more of a fitness band than a smartwatch.

According to Microsoft watcher Paul Thurrott, writing on his SuperSite for Windows (bit.ly/supersite349), the device will go head-to-head with Samsung's Galaxy Gear Fit, rather than devices such as the LG G Watch, Samsung Gear Live and Apple's iWatch.

This means that many of the features usually associated with smartwatches, such as the ability to make calls and take photos, will be absent, although the band will still display notifications from your phone on your wrist.

The fitness band will have additional sensors – possibly up to 11 – to monitor your heart rate, how many calories you've burned, how many steps you've taken and other activity-related data throughout the day, and interact with apps on your phone. This tallies with earlier reports that suggested the Microsoft smartwatch will not have a chunky screen, but will be more slimline, like a Nike+ Fuelband.

What will be unique about the device, according to Thurrott, is that it will work not only with Windows Phone devices, but also smartphones running Android and iOS. This is in stark contrast to the Galaxy Gear range, which only syncs with Samsung smartphones, or Android Wear smartwatches, which only sync with newer Android devices. It is also expected that Apple's iWatch, which is thought to be launching this autumn as well, will only work with iPhones and iPads running iOS 8 and higher.

According to Thurrott, the Microsoft device will cost around the same as the Galaxy Gear Fit – around £200 – and will be announced and on sale towards the end of this year, possibly in October.

LIKELIHOOD RATING

✓✓✓✓✓

We're not convinced Microsoft will duck out of the potentially lucrative smartwatch market, but it seems logical that it might first dip a toe in the wearable market with a fitness band.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Faster Wi-Fi on trains

Reports suggest that within three to four years, Wi-Fi on commuter trains across England and Wales will be up to 10 times faster than the service currently available.

Collect eBay packages from Argos

eBay customers will be able to collect goods from 650 Argos stores, with more than 65,000 of the auction site's sellers expected to offer this delivery method by the end of the year.

WE DON'T LIKE...

Virgin Media service outage

Virgin Media's DNS servers went offline twice during the first week of July, leaving customers across the UK without internet access.

Android security flaw

Phones running Android 4.3 or older are vulnerable to a flaw that could expose banking information to hackers. It could also disclose the PIN codes that are used to lock devices.

What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowd-funding site

BoozeBot

bit.ly/boozebot349 | **From £399**



The BoozeBot is the ultimate cocktail-making robot for your home or office, and has the ability to mix up to 16 ingredients and pour a tasty tipple within 30 seconds. Connect the BoozeBot to your Wi-Fi network and you can operate it using your phone or tablet, with the Pro and Premium models also offering a touchscreen interface. The BoozeBot currently has a library of 4,500 cocktail recipes, which is constantly updated so you'll never be short of something new to drink (be it alcoholic or not). At the time of writing, it had raised £3,546 of its £60,000 target.

Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

SECURITY ALERT! | What's been bothering us this fortnight

Cryptowall ransomware hosted on Dropbox

Cybercriminals have used Dropbox links in phishing emails to install malware on the PCs of unexpecting victims, according to anti-phishing website PhishMe (phishme.com).

The links lead to a ZIP file which, when extracted, contains a Windows screensaver file. This works as an effective disguise, since SRC files are treated in the same way as EXE files by Windows, but are not recognised as executable files by most users.

Once the file is run, it launches a ransom page in the user's browser demanding $500 (£292) in Bitcoins. It is thought that this malware, known as Cryptowall, may have infected more than 340,000 systems.

bit.ly/dropbox349

Social-engineering scams cost UK millions

More than £21 million has been lost to 'social engineering' scams since the start of the year, according to Financial Fraud Action UK. This type of crime involves the victim being tricked into giving out personal or financial information, whether by phishing emails or fraudulent phone calls (also known as vishing). According to FFA UK, around 23 per cent of people in the UK have received a cold call requesting personal information and within the first five months of 2014, some of the UKs major banks reported losses of more than £21 million from vishing attacks on their customers. The information service Get Safe Online has released a new series of informative videos to try to raise awareness of social-engineering scams.

bit.ly/getsafe349

PATCH TUESDAY: JULY

Released on 8 July, this month's Patch Tuesday contained only six bulletins (down from seven last month). Bulletins 1 and 2 were given Microsoft's highest severity rating of Critical and patched remote code execution vulnerabilities affecting all supported versions of Windows and IE6 onwards. Three of the remaining four bulletins dealt with "elevation of privilege" holes in Windows and had the severity rating of Important while Bulletin 6, which was rated as Moderate, affected Microsoft Server Software. In total, three of the bulletins required a system restart, so if you haven't yet rebooted your machine, you should do so as soon as possible. You can also check for updates manually by going to Control Panel, 'System and Security', Window Update, 'Check for updates'.

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT: Martijn Grooten, Editor of Virus Bulletin (www.virusbtn.com)

Q Do you really need to update your security software every year, when anti-virus programs constantly update their definitions?

John Beardsley, Facebook

A When you purchase a security product, what you really buy is a licence to use the product. This licence allows for definitions to be constantly updated. Some programs continue to work even if the licence has expired but, as new threats continue to arise, without the definitions being updated, the product's performance will quickly decline.

Moreover, most security products do much more than check files against their definitions: they protect your computer in many other ways, too. Newer versions of the product are typically better at proactively protecting against the latest threats. That is another reason why you should update your security software.

Q Are cybercriminals now moving away from 'traditional' viruses toward Trojans and ransomware?

Sue Andrews, Twitter

A Somewhat unfairly, many security experts cringe when they see the word 'virus' being used in the media. Virus refers to a very specific kind of malware and very few pieces of malware seen today are viruses. The main difference between viruses, Trojans and worms is mostly technical and has to do with how they spread, a distinction that you don't really need to worry about.

Ransomware refers to a specific kind of malware. Regardless of how it spreads, ransomware holds your files to ransom and demands a payment before allowing you to access them again. In the past, most ransomware could be evaded relatively easily; however, there is now a worrying trend of ransomware that uses strong file encryption to deny you access to your files. In such cases, the only way to regain access is to use back-ups.

+ Email us your security questions at webuser@dennis.co.uk



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Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

PARENTING

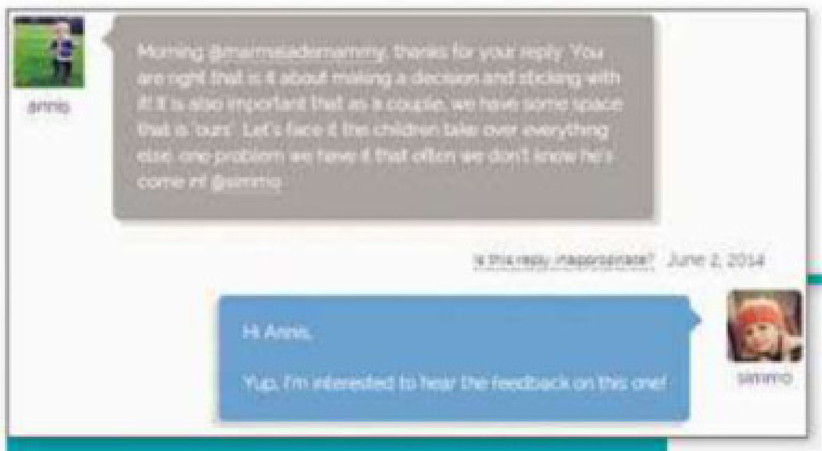
NEW

Up All Hours

upallhours.com

Parenting sites usually cater for mums *or* dads, but Up All Hours aims to connect, entertain and support everyone who's ever been deprived of sleep by their kids. With its sky-blue theme, animated intro video and insightful content, Up All Hours is different in tone to your usual parenting communities. Rather than laying down rules for how to bring up children, the resident writers share their personal experiences on topics such as the first family holiday, moving from crèche to kindergarten and surviving exam season with a teenager. It's a thoughtful, welcoming site, with some lovely design touches and a great blog.

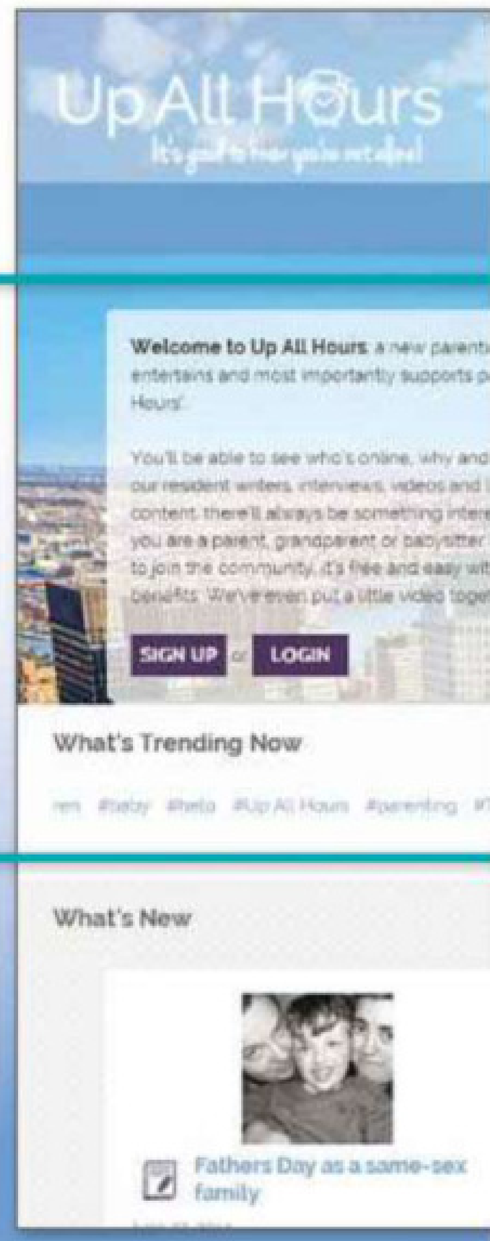
Our rating ★★★★★

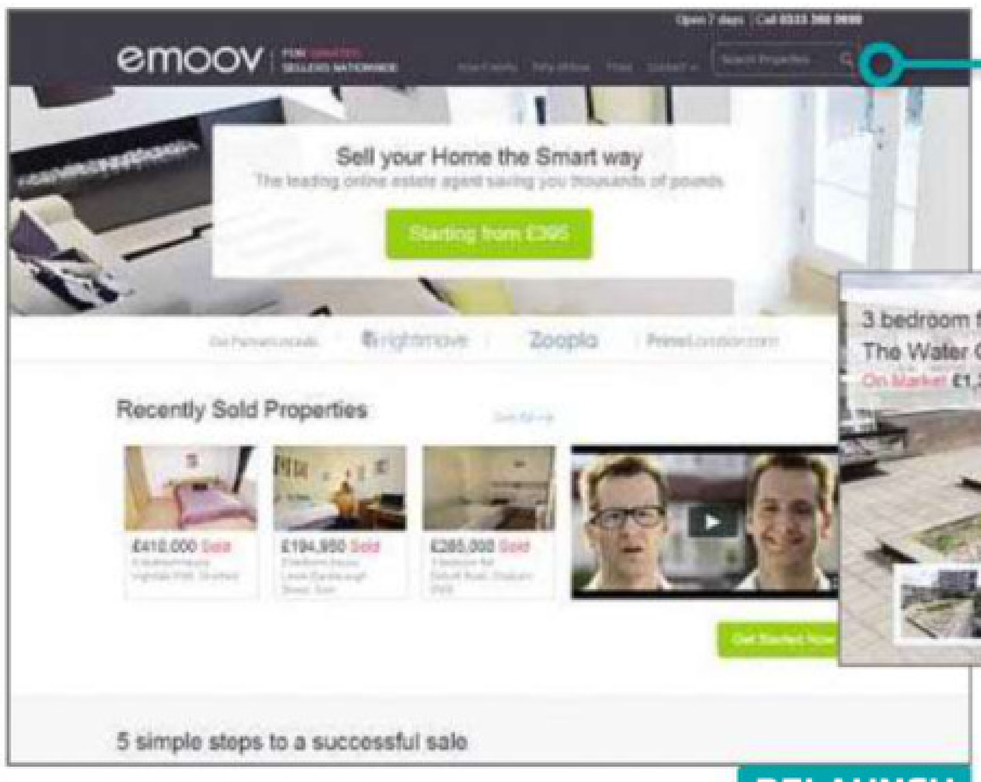


COMMUNITY
The message board is cleverly laid out like a group chat on a phone



WRITERS
The Up All Hours team writes about all manner of parenting topics





RELAUNCH

PROPERTY

eMoov

www.emoov.co.uk

Property sites often overwhelm you with information, but eMoov – which claims to be the UK's largest online estate agent – has opted for a streamlined, tablet-friendly redesign. The site is a pleasure to browse, even if you're just window shopping, with well-sized photo slideshows, floorplans and maps of every property; descriptions that provide the key facts without the waffle; and speedy search filters. If you're selling your home, eMoov's affordable packages, which cost as little as £474 (including VAT), are explained in clear terms with a calculator to work out how much you'll save. Smarter, simpler and friendlier, eMoov's success looks set to keep growing.

Our rating ★★★★★



NEW

HEALTH

Patient Safety in the NHS

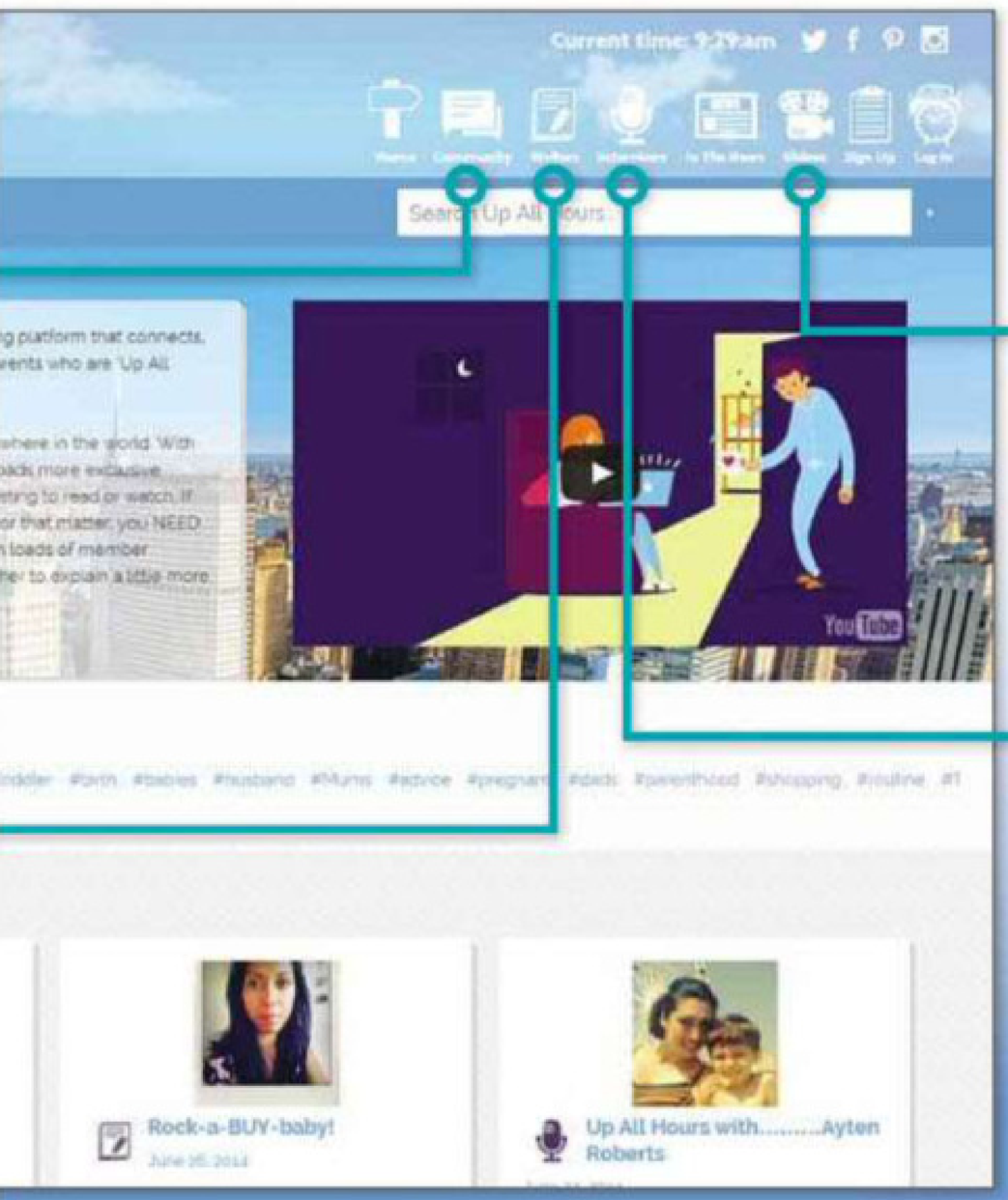
www.nhs.uk/safety/search

You can now find the best- and worst-performing hospitals and GPs in your area using the new Patient Safety section of the NHS Choices website. Enter your postcode or town to view results for your area, with each healthcare facility rated on a wide range of categories spanning everything from infection control and cleanliness to waiting times and patient complaints. The site conveniently presents a large volume of data in one place, but there's something glib about providing simplistic colour-coded statistics with no supporting information.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

Reviews by Robert Irvine

We review this fortnight's best new and relaunched websites and rate them for content, design and features





VIDEOS
Watch Jamie Oliver taking on the Nappy Changing Challenge

INTERVIEWS
Read informal conversations with parents from all over the world





RELAUNCH

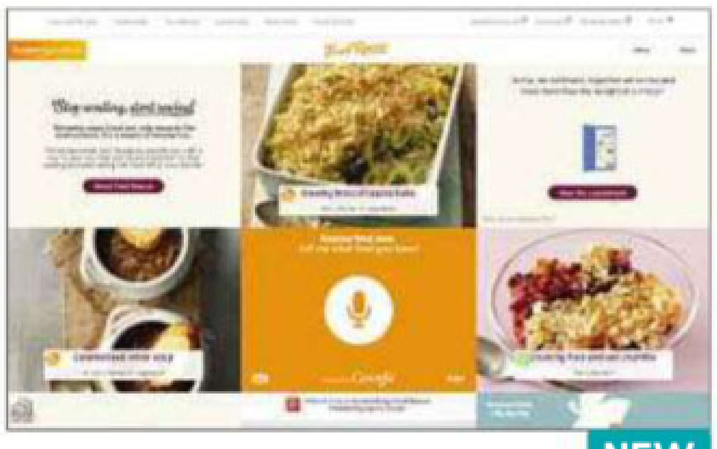
ANIMALS

World Animal Protection

www.worldanimalprotection.org.uk

The charity formerly known as World Society for the Protection of Animals has a new website to match its new name. This provides clear, concise information about its campaigns to fight cruelty against domestic, farm and wild animals, in a simple layout that makes striking use of photos. A new intro video outlines why the charity's work is so important, and balances heartbreaking footage of abused dogs and bears with a positive message about how change can be achieved. Best of all, making a monthly or one-off donation couldn't be easier.

Our rating ★★★★☆



NEW

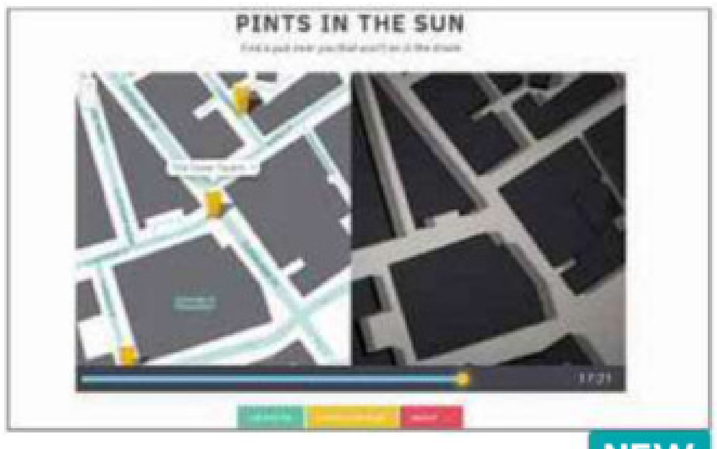
FOOD

Sainsbury's Food Rescue

www.sainsburysfoodrescue.co.uk

Sainsbury's has teamed up with Google to offer tips for turning our leftovers into delicious meals to stop us wasting food. The site makes great use of Google's voice-search tool: just say the ingredient you want to rescue and it finds you a recipe (you can still use the keyboard if you prefer). Other interesting elements include food-preservation tips, and leaderboards of the cities and counties that have recycled the most food and their most-rescued ingredients (lamb in Plymouth). It's certainly more inventive than most recipe sites.

Our rating ★★★★☆



NEW

DRINK

Pints in the Sun

pintsinthesun.co.uk

Pints in the Sun solves an age-old problem for alfresco drinkers: finding a pub where you won't be in the shade if you sit or stand outside. The site automatically detects your location, then marks nearby pubs as pints on a map, or lets you search for a pub by name. Once you've found a drinking establishment, drag the slider to a time of day to see the 3D view on the right, then adjust to show sunny and shady areas. The site emphasises that it's only an experiment, with no information about beer gardens or other pub facilities, but it's useful if you fancy a drink in the sunshine.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

Tell us about your website via webuser@dennis.co.uk

Best New Websites



NEW

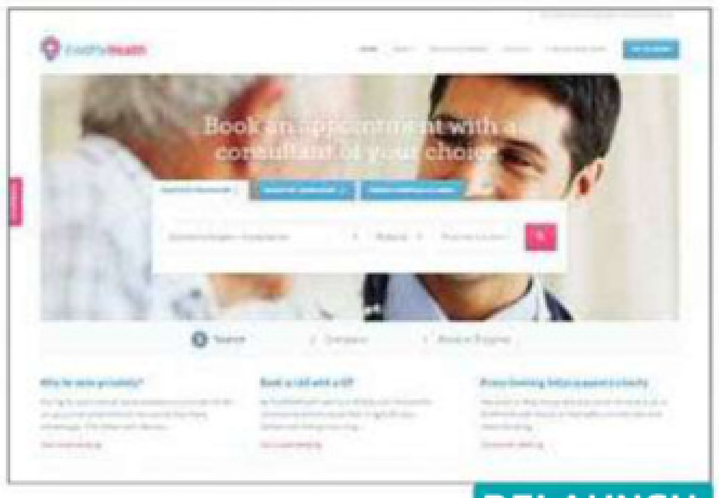
FAMILY

KidRated

kidrated.com

This ingenious site provides reviews "for kids by kids" of things to see and do in London. It invites children to share their opinions of attractions, entertainment, restaurants and more, by posting videos and photos, and rating them out of 10. KidRated also provides visitor information and tips for parents, including special 'Mum Reports'. It's a great idea, considering that kids are the best judges of family days out, presented in a fun, lively manner. There are already reviews outside the capital, including 9-year-old Mia and Scarlett's appraisal of Marwell Zoo, and the videos are surprisingly well made.

Our rating ★★★★☆



RELAUNCH

HEALTH

FindMeHealth

findmehealth.com

FindMeHealth lets you arrange private healthcare appointments with the best available doctors. You can search the site by procedure (if you have a diagnosis) or consultant type (if you've yet to be diagnosed), with options ranging from gallbladder surgery to caesarean delivery. The results include details of cost, clinician experience and patient rating, and either let you book online or submit an enquiry, although we found the listings rather patchy for many procedures. Still, if you've got the money (or health insurance), the site could save you time and suffering, and we like its clearly explained procedure guides.

Our rating ★★★☆☆



NEW

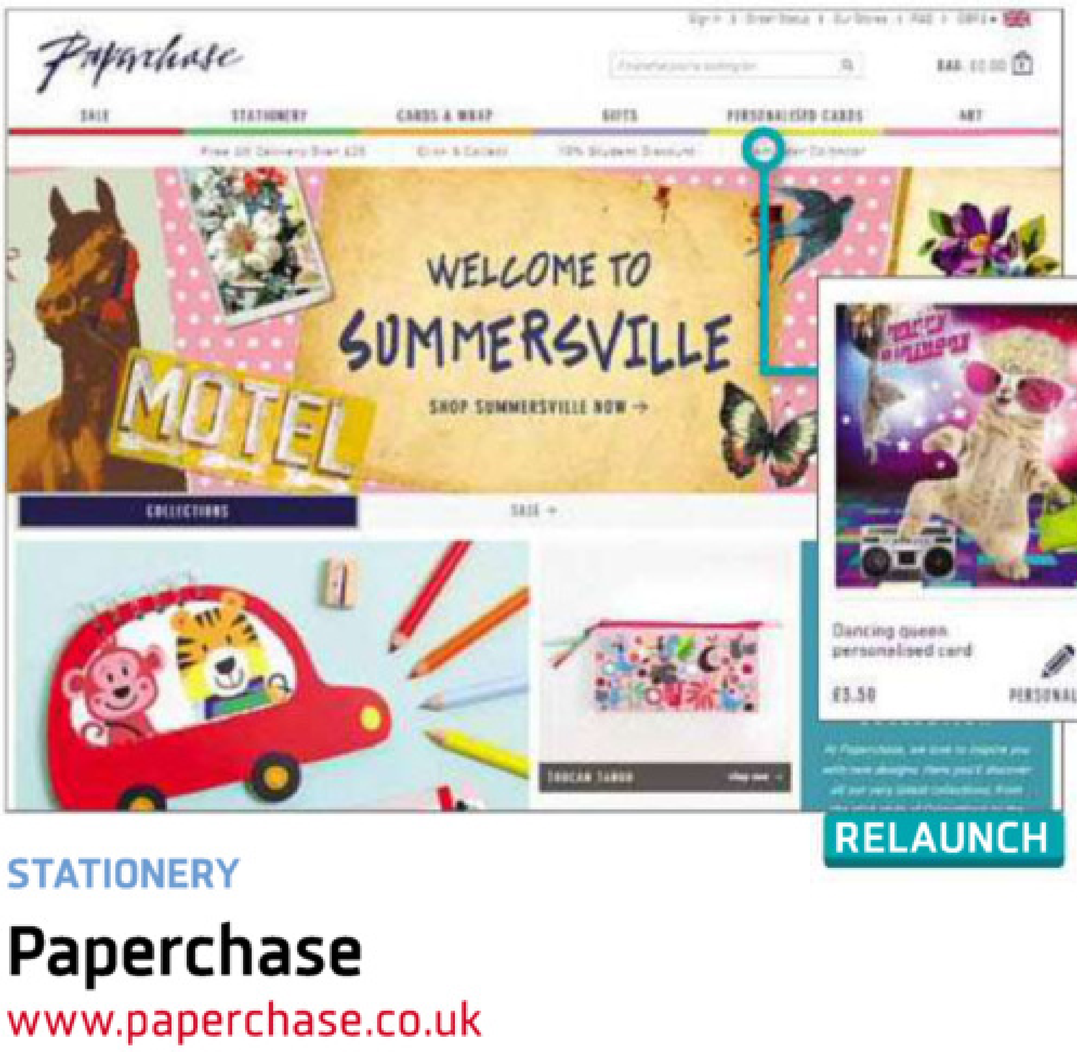
EVENTS

BBC at the Edinburgh Festivals

www.bbc.co.uk/events/ejh38g

Sunglasses are advised when visiting the BBC's Edinburgh Festival site, which has more garish pink than a Katie Price wedding. Still, it does a sterling job of promoting the event and the Beeb's involvement in it, from the big countdown clock to the BBC@Potterow Twitter account and #BBCEdFest hashtag. You can book tickets for the BBC's free shows and live broadcasts, which include 'The Infinite Monkey Cage' featuring Professor Brian Cox. Once the festival starts, you'll be able to catch up with radio and TV coverage through the site, and there's even a handy weather forecast.

Our rating ★★★★☆



RELAUNCH

STATIONERY

Paperchase

www.paperchase.co.uk

The high-street home of cards, stationery and gifts has revamped its website to work equally well on mobile devices and PCs. We're not particularly keen on the massive "inspirational" images that now swamp the homepage, but elsewhere on the site the larger product photos work well, letting you zoom in to inspect the decorative details. The design is better organised, making it easier to switch between sections, and you can hover over your shopping bag to review its contents and head to the checkout. Delivery is now free on orders over £25 (down from £30) or you can use Paperchase's new Click & Collect service to pick up most items from one of 50 stores.

Our rating ★★★★☆



NEW

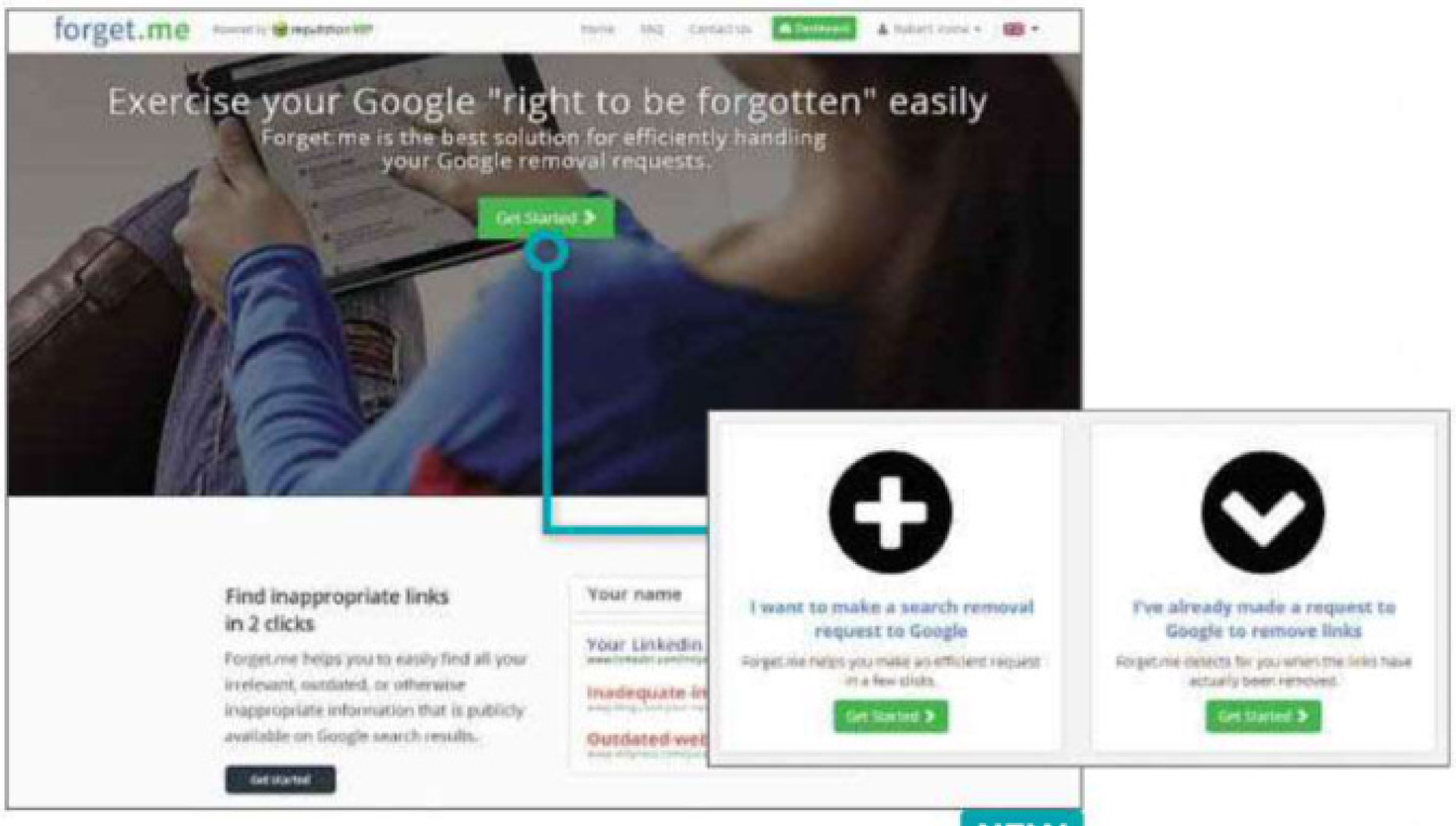
SERVICES

HireBobs.co.uk

www.hirebobs.co.uk

From a circular saw to a bouncy castle, this "digital garden fence" lets you hire all manner of products and services from people in your area. Simply search for what you need and where to view matching results as you type, or browse the categories to see what's on offer. Some listings are more detailed than others, but most include photos and a location map, as well as info about rental costs and a button to contact the owner. Currently, most HireBobs.co.uk users are in the North West, but it could prove popular nationwide once it irons out a few design quirks, and its payment plans are very reasonable.

Our rating ★★★☆☆



NEW

PRIVACY

Forget.me

forget.me

If you enjoyed our 'Remove yourself from Google' feature in Issue 347, check out Forget.me, which makes it easy to submit "right to be forgotten" requests. The site looks up your name on Google and lets you click 'Forget this' next to any links you want removed. You then select a justification for the request, for example defamation, misused identity or invasion of privacy, and edit the text provided to suit your case. Once the request is submitted, the site detects when the offending link is removed. Although you could do all this yourself, Forget.me puts a friendly face on the process and saves you having to write the whole justification part. It's free to use, but Reputation VIP (www.reputationvip.com), which runs the site, may later start charging.

Our rating ★★★★☆



NEW

CODING

Made With Code

www.madewithcode.com

This site from Google aims to redress gender imbalance in the tech industry by inspiring the "next generation of girl coders". It's already been accused of sexism by suggesting that young ladies get started with coding by designing a bracelet, but there's more depth to it than that (although the pink colour scheme doesn't help). As well as several less twee projects, there are inspirational videos featuring successful female coders and links to other online coding resources. The Events section won't be much use until Made With Code launches in the UK, but the site's intentions seem honourable.

Our rating ★★★★☆

ALSO NEW

MUSIC

BBC Big Band

bigbandspecial.co.uk

★★★★☆

This splendid site tells you about the history of the BBC's jazz orchestra and lists their forthcoming shows. Most importantly, it lets you tap a toe to the band's swinging music, offering playlists of concerts and live sessions.

PETS

GJW Titmuss

www.gjwtitmuss.co.uk

★★★★☆

The 100-year old pet store has updated its website to give customers easier access to its extensive range of animal supplies. Deals of the week are highlighted on the homepage and delivery is free on orders over £19.

DATING

MySingleTent

mysingletent.com

★★★☆☆

The dating site MySingleFriend has launched this site to help single people hook up at festivals this summer. Tell the site which events you or your single friends are attending to see other "hot singles" who'll be there. You'll need a MySingleFriend account to use the site.

GIFTS

Buy Our Honeymoon

www.buy-our-honeymoon.com

★★★☆☆

Rather than receiving unwanted fondue sets and the like, use this site to get your wedding guests to fund your honeymoon. You can create a customised gift-list page to receive payments and send out up to 70 cards to friends and family. It costs £55, but you can try the site for free for a week.

HISTORY

TrowelBlazers

trowelblazers.com

★★★★☆

This fascinating site celebrates female archaeologists, paleontologists and geologists. It also accepts guest posts and suggestions for articles about inspiring women.

WEBSITE SECRETS

Flip the bird and catch the kittens



We've often written about the Konami Code as a means of revealing hidden surprises in websites. In case you're not familiar with the code, it involves pressing the following sequence of keys on your keyboard: Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A.

We've just discovered two additional sites that have Konami Code-triggered Easter Eggs. Go to Twitter (twitter.com) and type the code to see the bluebird logo at the top of the page spin through 360 degrees. If that doesn't excite you, go to the US site for *Elle* magazine (www.elle.com), enter the code and watch a kitten glide across your screen. Keep pressing A to show more kittens.

Tell us about your website via webuser@dennis.co.uk

Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

How to sell digital downloads

Blogger Amit Agarwal of Digital Inspiration (www.labnol.org) has developed a simple script that makes it easy to use your website to sell files (such as photos and ebooks). Free to download from bit.ly/sellfiles349, it lets you store your files on Google Drive, then uses Gmail to deliver them automatically when a customer pays via PayPal. If you only have a couple of things to sell, this is quicker and easier than installing e-commerce software.

Privacy warning on .uk domains

If your web address ends in .uk and you use it to make money, you may lose the right to keep your home address private on Nominet's WHOIS database (bit.ly/whois349). Previously, an individual registering a .uk address (including .co.uk, .org.uk, .me.uk and .uk) could choose to remain anonymous, but new opt-out rules from Nominet mean that webmasters earning even tiny amounts through adverts or affiliate links could be waiving their right to anonymity. See bit.ly/optout349 for more info.

New blog from 1&1

Web-host blogs can be an invaluable source of web-building advice. The latest host to start blogging is 1&1 (blog.1and1.co.uk). It has info on the latest domain names, tips for using WordPress, and advice on getting the most from your website.

Deal of the Fortnight

Get a great price on Heart Internet's fully featured Business Pro hosting (www.heartinternet.co.uk/web-hosting), currently 50 per cent off at £6.50 per month

Web Building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Alex Mace, Applications Development Manager, names.co.uk (www.names.co.uk)

Q **Many hosting companies offer Linux and Windows options. How do the two systems differ?**

Colin, Web User Forums

A In hosting terms, Linux and Windows refer to the operating systems that run on the servers hosting your website. They support different scripting languages and technologies: Linux servers let you run applications written in PHP, Ruby, Python or Perl, and use MySQL databases; Windows supports .NET languages such as C# and Visual Basic.NET, and uses Microsoft SQL Server databases. To build a small website or blog, you can choose between apps such as WordPress, Joomla or BlogEngine.NET. WordPress and Joomla are written in PHP, so they need Linux to run. BlogEngine.NET uses .NET, so it needs Windows hosting.

MINI WORKSHOP | Keep track of YouTube viewers

YouTube Creator Studio: www.youtube.com/dashboard | 10 mins | Any browser

Using video can help draw visitors to your website and YouTube is the obvious hosting choice. Creator Studio has a handy collection of tools to help you get the most from it.



1 Click your account icon, 1 then the Creator Studio button. 2 You start in the Dashboard, which provides at-a-glance information on your recent views 3 and subscribers, 4 along with some tips and a list of videos and comments.



2 Clicking Video Manager 1 takes you to a list of all your videos. Tick the boxes 2 next to any that you want to change, then choose your option from the Actions menu. 3 There are also icons that show the number of views, whether the video is publicly viewable and if it's set to display adverts. 4



3 Analytics 1 provides information on how much your videos are being viewed 2 and interacted with. 3 The sub-menu options 4 can provide information on your audience, including their gender and geographical location. If you've turned on adverts, you can also track your earnings.

+ Email us your website building questions at webuser@dennis.co.uk

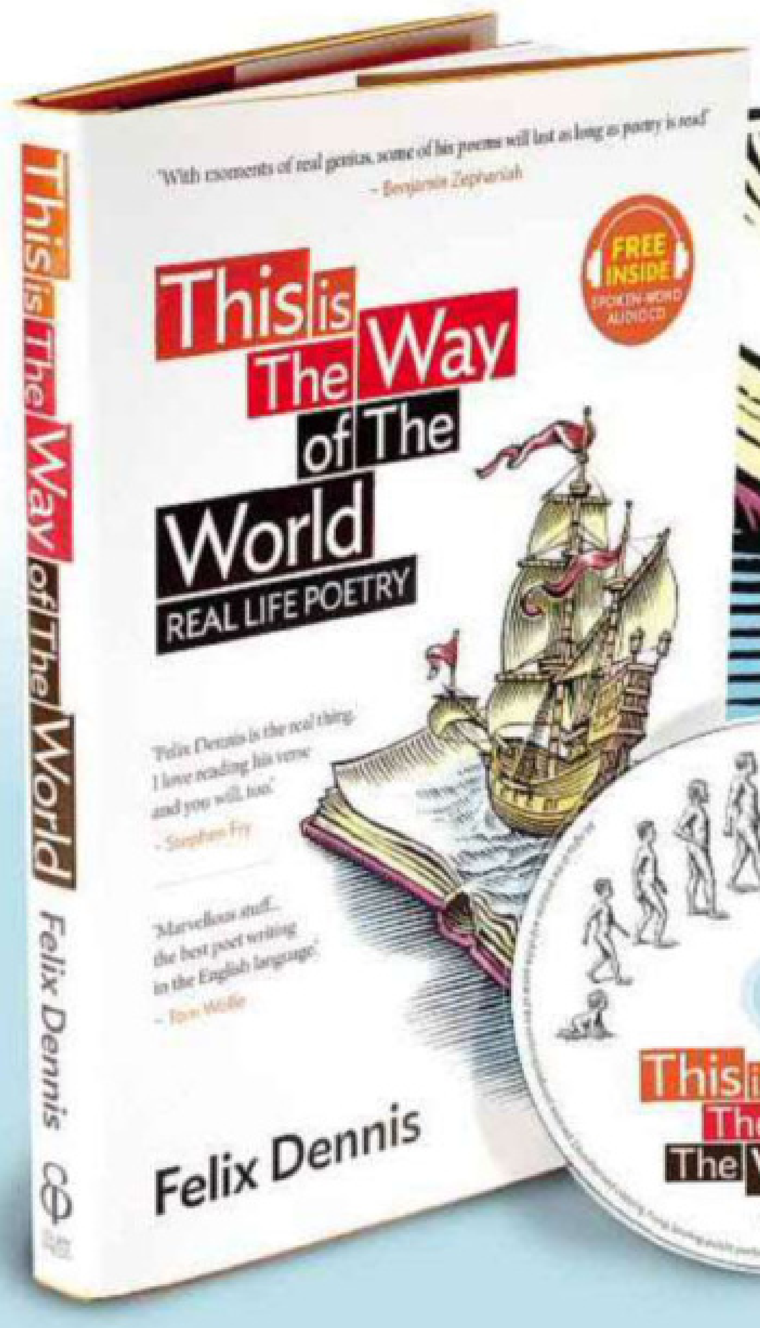
'With moments of real genius, some of his poems will last as long as poetry is read.'

– Benjamin Zephaniah

This is The Way of The World

Felix Dennis

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A book of poems for those who don't read poetry (as well as for those who do!)

A collection of 'real life' poems by Felix Dennis, one of Britain's best-loved poets, charting life's course from infant to endings with illustrations by Bill Sanderson.

www.felixdennis.com contains many poems, published and unpublished, as well as a library of sound recordings and video footage of Felix Dennis's verse and poetry tours.

EBURY PRESS

HD monitors under £200

Did you know you can get a new high-definition monitor for under £200? **Andy Shaw** tests six affordable high-res screens

Your monitor is your window into your PC, which makes it one of your computer's most important peripheral devices. The six monitors we've reviewed here all have a screen resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels, so they're capable of showing HD video in all its glory. This means there's plenty of pixel space for all your other PC work, so you can fit more on screen and use Windows more efficiently. The screen sizes in this test vary from 23 to 28in, so there's something for every desk, no matter how big or small.

HOW WE TESTED

We tested each monitor with a calibration device, which measures the percentage of sRGB standard colours that each monitor is capable of displaying. We performed this test on the monitor as it comes, straight out of the box, and compared it to the screen's potential when it's fully calibrated. We also measured the contrast ratio, which indicates how well a monitor can pick out detail, even when images are very dark or very bright.

BenQ EW2740L | £194 | www.ebuyer.com

FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

The BenQ EW2740L is a Full HD 27in monitor with a VA (Vertical Alignment) screen and a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels.

The monitor's ports are on the back of the screen but are easy to access. It has two HDMI inputs, one of which is MHL (Mobile High-Definition Link)-compatible. This means you can connect an MHL-compatible phone or tablet to the monitor and view the device's contents on the screen. See bit.ly/mhllist349 for a list of supported devices. It'll even charge the device while you're doing it. There's no DVI input, though, so if your graphics card doesn't have an HDMI output, you'll need to buy a DVI-to-HDMI adapter. These are widely available and cost around £2.

We tested the MHL connection with an HTC One X+ and it worked well. At first, the phone's screen appeared in portrait mode as a strip down the centre of the screen, which was a little disconcerting, but it reorientated itself automatically after we loaded landscape-friendly apps, such as YouTube and the photo app.

When we first turned on the monitor, it was set to its Low Blue Light picture mode. According to BenQ, this reduces the screen's blue light emissions, which is better for your eyes. We found this produced a cool, dim appearance, though its four sub-settings gave us a warmer look. Testing with the colour calibrator showed that the monitor was displaying 92.4 per cent of sRGB colours on this default setting, which is the third best in this group. With calibration, this rose to 98.2 per cent, which resulted in bright, natural-looking colours.

Our tests also showed ultra-low black levels of 0.09cd/m². The black was solid across the screen with no sign of any bleeding through the back light. This makes for excellent contrast levels, and we measured a contrast ratio of 2,478:1. In practice, too, the BenQ EW2740L displayed a lot of detail, even in our darkest test images.

WebUser GOLD AWARD



VERDICT ★★★★★

The BenQ EW2740L is an excellent 27in monitor, with good image quality and a wealth of picture options. The screen is great value, and its MHL support is a useful addition if you have a compatible device. However, the range of ports is a bit narrow, which means it's not hugely versatile, and there's no DVI port, so you might need an adapter. But if you're looking for a large monitor at a low price, it's a great buy.

Iiyama ProLite XB2483HSU-B1

£140.69 | www.scan.co.uk

FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★☆



This compact 24in monitor isn't much cheaper than the bigger models in our test, but what it lacks in screen area it makes up for with an interesting and useful collection of extra features.

For starters, the screen can rotate 90 degrees into portrait mode, which is a more favourable orientation for viewing web pages and documents. Secondly, it can also work as a USB hub, providing two ports you can plug your devices into.

It performed well in our tests, showing 94.1 per cent of the sRGB colour range in default mode, which was the top result of all the monitors we tested. Using the calibration tool, this performance was pushed up to 99.9 per cent, which is exceptional. It also measured 0.09cd/m² at its blackest, with a good contrast ratio of 2,984:1.

VERDICT ★★★★☆

This is a pricey monitor for a 24in model, but if you're happy to trade size for extra features, it's fantastic value for money. It has the best colour reproduction of any of the monitors we tested and comes a close second to the AOC model for contrast.

AOC m2870Vq | £157.54

www.dabs.com

FEATURES ★★★★☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★☆
EASE OF USE ★★★☆☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★



If you want a huge screen at an affordable price, the AOC m2870Vq is hard to beat. It's a 28in MVA (Multidomain Vertical Alignment) screen with a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels. It has a good collection of ports, with VGA, DVI, HDMI and DisplayPort all available.

Our calibration tool showed the black level to be a very low 0.07cd/m², with a superb contrast ratio of 3,299:1. However, its colour accuracy wasn't so impressive, showing just 89.9 per cent of the sRGB colour range at its default settings. Our adjustments got this up to 93.4 per cent, but you'll need to use a special calibration tool to get the same result. Our test pictures didn't look as vibrant as on the BenQ EW2740L.

If anything, we found the screen too big. If you're very close you can see the pixels. Sit the screen further back on your desk, though, and it's an impressive display at a good price.

VERDICT ★★★★☆

There aren't many 28in monitors available for less than £200, so if size is your priority, the m2870Vq provides excellent value for money. However, the colour isn't as accurate as the other award winners and it needs calibrating to get the most out of it.

BEST OF THE REST

Iiyama ProLite XU2390HS-B1 | £124.99

www.cclonline.com | ★★★★☆

FEATURES ★★★☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★☆
EASE OF USE ★★★☆☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★☆



The Iiyama ProLite XU2390HS-B1 is a budget 23in IPS (In-Plane Switching) monitor with a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels. It has a very thin bezel (the plastic area around the outside of the screen) but this benefit is undermined by a 1cm black border around the inside when it's switched on.

The screen performed well, displaying 92.8 per cent of the sRGB colour range at its default settings, though it only improved to 93.1 per cent with calibration. The screen's black level measured 0.2cd/m², so it lets a little more light escape than our award winners, and we measured its contrast at 1,000:1, which is also below average in this group.

Philips 244E5QHAD | £149

www.debenhamsplus.com | ★★★☆☆

FEATURES ★★★★☆ PERFORMANCE ★★☆☆☆
EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆☆



This 24in IPS screen has a VGA port and two HDMI ports, one of which is compatible with MHL devices. If you want to use your monitor as more than just a PC screen, the two HDMI ports are a handy extra.

It displayed 88 per cent of the sRGB colour range out of the box, which made it the worst performer in this group. We increased that to 91.5 per cent after calibration, but this didn't lift it out of the lower half of the group. Its contrast, at just 897:1, was the worst of our test monitors and it let through 0.27cd/m² of light when displaying its darkest black.

Hannsg HS271 | £175.19

www.misco.co.uk | ★★★☆☆

FEATURES ★★★☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★☆☆
EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆☆



The HS271 is a 27in screen at an affordable price, but it has a low build quality with a chunky 2cm bezel around the outside edge of the screen and a wobbly stand. And the compromises don't end there. Performance was below average across the board. The monitor produced 90 per cent of sRGB's colour range, which is the fourth best on test. It also lets out 0.3cd/m² of light when the monitor is showing its darkest black, which was the worst score in this test, and its contrast ratio of 1,000:1 tied second to last.

Group Test HD monitors

MAKE AND MODEL	BenQ EW2740L	Iiyama ProLite XB2483HSU-B1	AOC m2870Vq	Iiyama ProLite XU2390HS-B1	Philips 244E5QHAD
					
WEBSITE	www.benq.co.uk	www.iiyama.com	www.aoc-europe.com	www.iiyama.com	www.philips.co.uk
PRICE	£194	£140.69	£157.54	£124.99	£149
BUY FROM	www.ebuyer.com	www.scan.co.uk	www.dabs.com	www.cclonline.com	www.debenhamsplus.com
SIZE	27in	24in	28in	23in	23.8in
RESOLUTION	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels	1,920 x 1,080 pixels
PORTRAIT MODE	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
INTEGRATED SPEAKERS	✓ 2W stereo	✓ 2W stereo	✗	✓ 2W stereo	✓ 5W stereo
USB HUB	✗	✓ 2-port USB	✗	✗	✗
EXTRAS	MHL support, headphone port	✗	✗	✗	MHL support, headphone port
VIDEO INPUTS	2 x HDMI, VGA	DVI, HDMI, VGA	DisplayPort, DVI, HDMI, VGA	DVI, HDMI, VGA	2 x HDMI, VGA
DIMENSIONS	320 x 115 x 95mm	246 x 236 x 70mm	241 x 239 x 55mm	218 x 165 x 84mm	215 x 211 x 98mm
WARRANTY	One-year return to base	Three-year onsite	Three-year return to base	Two-year onsite	Three-year collect and return

OUR VERDICT

If you're looking for a great-value HD screen and you have the space for it, a 27in model for under £200 is a worthwhile purchase. Our favourite was the BenQ EW2740L. It produced good picture quality all round at an affordable price, and wins our Gold Award.

The Silver Award goes to the Iiyama ProLite XB2483HSU-B1. This is a smaller screen, so it's a good option if you have limited desk space, but the picture quality is excellent. It can also perform some clever tricks, such as rotating into portrait mode.

A screen the size of the Bronze Award-winning 28in AOC m2870Vq ought to cost more than £200, so at over £40 less, it's superb value for money. The colour isn't as accurate as on the other award winners but if you want the biggest screen you can get for the price, the AOC is an excellent option. ■

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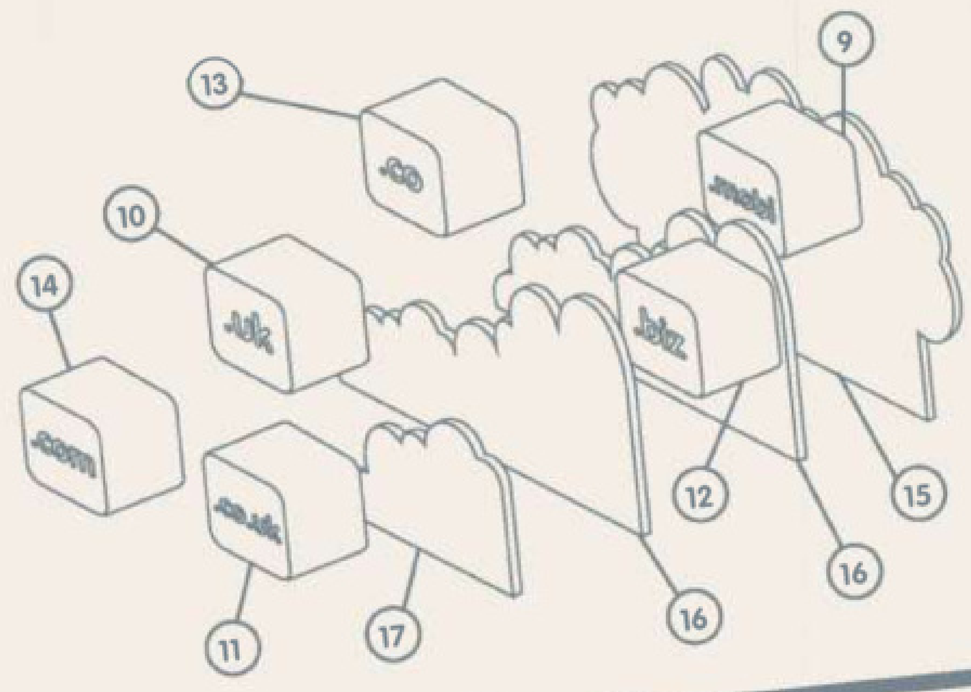
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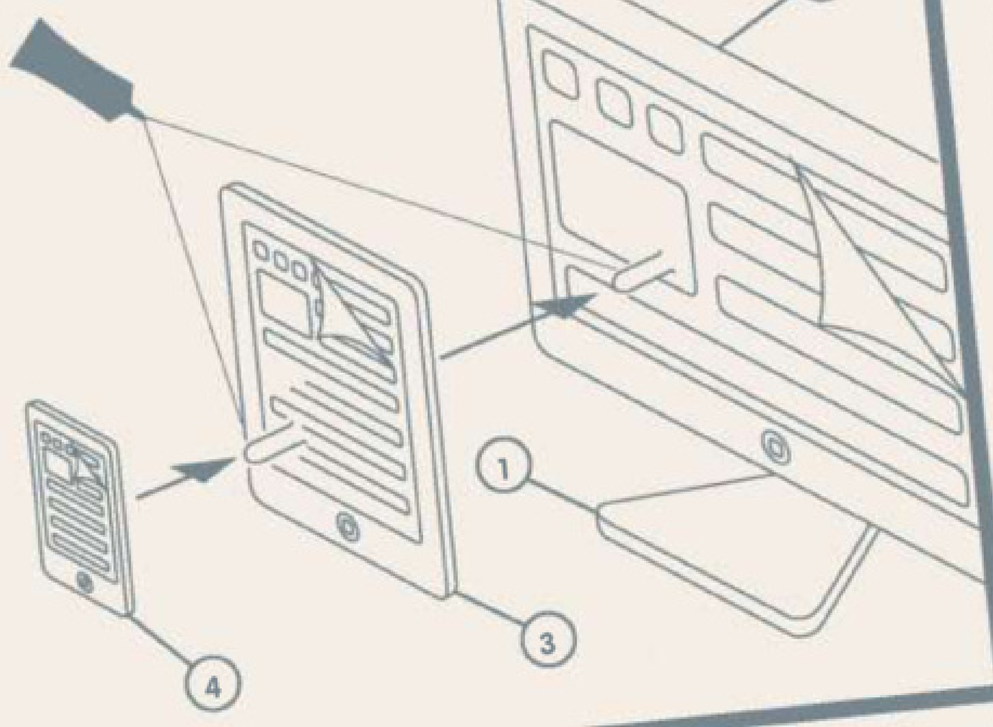
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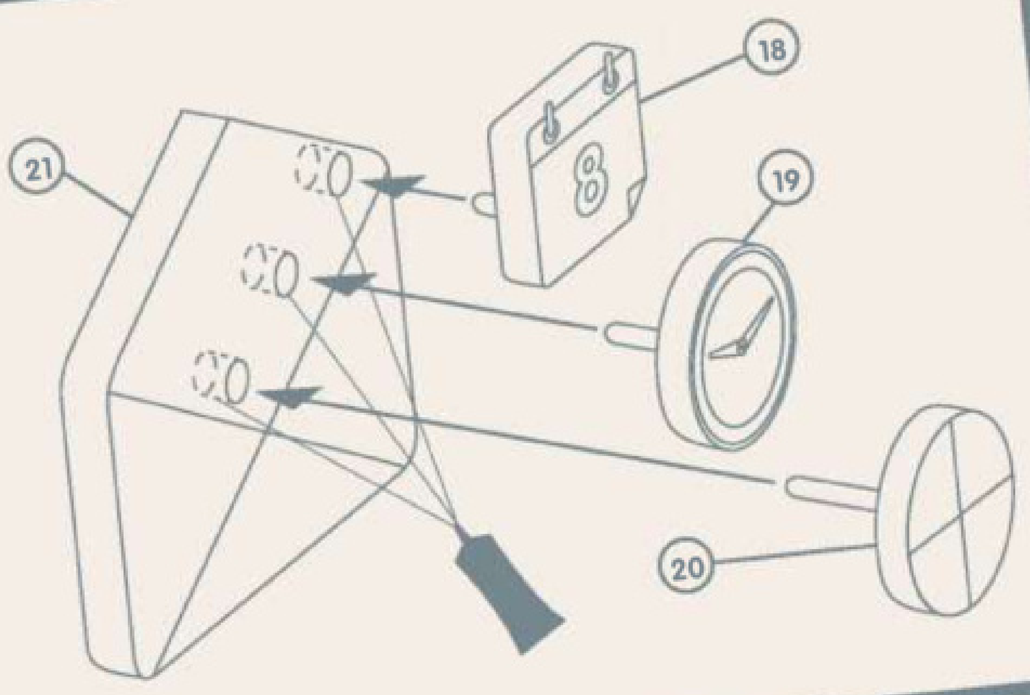
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HARDWARE

MONITOR

NEW!

BenQ EW2740L



£194 from www.ebuyer.com
Date tested: July 2014

The BenQ EW2740L is an excellent-value 27in monitor with good image quality. It supports MHL, so you can connect a compatible mobile device to it, and has two HDMI ports and one VGA port.

KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 2W stereo speakers ■ MHL support ■ 2 x HDMI and 1 x VGA ports ■ 320 x 115 x 95mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

CHROMEBOOK

Acer C720P Chromebook



£244.81 from www.ilgs.net
Date tested: June 2014

This fantastic Chromebook provides excellent overall performance, decent battery life and a good collection of ports. It's got a smart touchscreen, comfy keyboard and touchpad, and it starts up in no time at all.

KEY SPECS

1.4GHz Intel Celeron 2955U processor ■ 16GB storage ■ 2GB memory ■ 11.6in screen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 7.5 hours battery life ■ USB 3, USB 2 and HDMI ports ■ 288 x 204 x 20mm ■ 1.35kg

LAPTOP

Asus X552CL



£429.99 from www.ebuyer.com
Date tested: May 2014

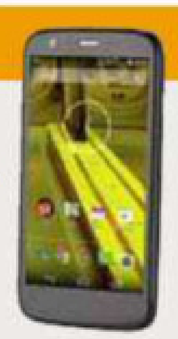
This laptop's Windows and gaming performance far exceed what you'd usually get for its price. However, it's slightly let down by its battery life.

KEY SPECS

1.8GHz Intel Core i5-3337U dual-core processor ■ 6GB memory ■ 15.6in (non-touch) LCD ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 750GB hard drive ■ 10/100/1,000 Ethernet, 802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 348 x 241 x 31mm ■ 2.4kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

SMARTPHONE

Motorola Moto G



£99.99 (PAYG) from www.argos.co.uk
Date tested: April 2014

The excellent Moto G has set a new standard in affordable smartphones. Although it doesn't support 4G or NFC, and there's no microSD card slot to expand its storage, it has a beautiful screen and performs well.

KEY SPECS

1.2GHz quad-core processor ■ 8GB storage ■ 1,280 x 720 pixels resolution ■ 4.5in screen ■ 1GB memory ■ Android 4.4 (KitKat) ■ 5-megapixel and 1.3-megapixel cameras ■ 130 x 66 x 12mm ■ 143g ■ 3G/GPS/Bluetooth/802.11n Wi-Fi

BASE UNIT PC

Chillblast Fusion Quasar



£600 from www.chillblast.com
Date tested: March 2014

The Chillblast Fusion Quasar is a great all-round PC offering superb performance and plenty of room for expansion. It's expensive compared to other base unit PCs, but comes with a five-year warranty and a high-performing SSHD hard drive.

KEY SPECS

3.4GHz Intel Core i5-4670K processor ■ 8GB DDR3 memory ■ Gigabyte GA-Z87-HD3 motherboard ■ 1TB hybrid HD/SSD hard drive ■ Windows 8.1 64-bit ■ Five-year return-to-base warranty ■ 465 x 430 x 192mm

NAS DRIVE

Western Digital My Cloud 2TB



£119.98 from www.dabs.com
Date tested: February 2014

This NAS drive, which comes with a 2TB drive pre-installed, is great value for money and is reasonably straightforward to set up. It lacks advanced features, such as RAID, but should prove ideal for most home users.

KEY SPECS

650MHz Marvell Armada XP processor ■ 256MB RAM ■ 2TB capacity ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 1 x USB 3 port ■ One drive bay ■ External device support ■ UPnP/DLNA and iTunes media server functions ■ 170 x 139 x 49mm

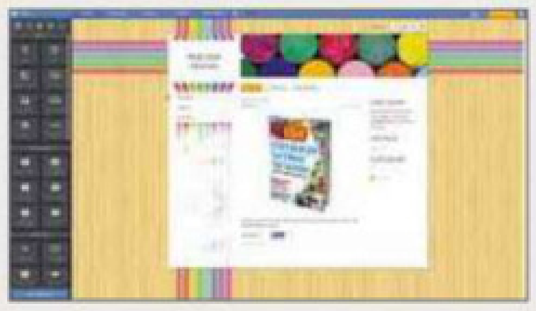
All prices correct at time of review

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

ONLINE SITE BUILDER

Weebly

From free from www.weebly.com
Date tested: May 2014



Weebly's drag-and-drop interface makes it extremely easy to use. Its templates are a little restrictive, but there are still plenty of options to choose from and the results look great. It also has free Android and iOS apps, although these only offer limited editing.

KEY FEATURES
115 templates ■ Unlimited storage ■ SEO tools ■ Meta tags ■ Password protection ■ E-commerce tools ■ Ad-free Starter edition ■ Android and iOS apps ■ RSS ■ Site stats

ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com
Date tested: April 2014



Google Drive offers an impressive range of tools. Its free service includes plenty of cloud storage and its recent price drop makes expanding this more affordable than ever.

KEY FEATURES
15GB of free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8+ ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.19 per month; 1TB for £5.97 per month; 10TB for £59.51 per month

PHOTO EDITING

Adobe Photoshop Elements 12

£54.71 from www.adobe.com/uk
Date tested: March 2014



With its tidy, uncluttered interface and pop-out trays, Adobe Photoshop Elements provides everything an amateur photographer could need and helps you quickly find the right editing tools.

KEY FEATURES
Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8+, including 64-bit versions ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 12

£62.34 from www.ballicom.co.uk
Date tested: October 2013



Premiere Elements 12's superb interface makes its many features neat but accessible. It's great for both beginners and experts, with two editing modes and lots of guidance. You won't find better video-editing software for the price.

KEY FEATURES
Automatic editing ■ Image stabiliser ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Upload to Facebook, YouTube and Vimeo ■ Surround-sound support ■ DVD and Blu-ray disc-burning ■ Unlimited timelines ■ Stop-motion capture

WEB FILTER

Norton Family

Free from www.symantec.com
Date tested: October 2013



This family-friendly software has all the most important filtering features and does an excellent job of blocking potentially harmful sites. Best of all, it's free to download and use.

KEY FEATURES
10-PC licence ■ Compatible with Windows XP/Vista/7/8, Mac OS X 10.7+ ■ Category filters ■ Customisable profiles ■ Whitelist/blacklist ■ Remote management ■ IM and social-network monitoring ■ Blocks chat, newsgroups and P2P ■ Email support

ONLINE BACK-UP

SquirrelSave

£61 a year from www.squirrelsave.co.uk
Date tested: August 2013



With its unlimited storage, ability to handle back-ups from multiple PCs and retention of old versions of your files, SquirrelSave is an excellent choice for backing up loads of data. It's very easy to use and provides great value for money.

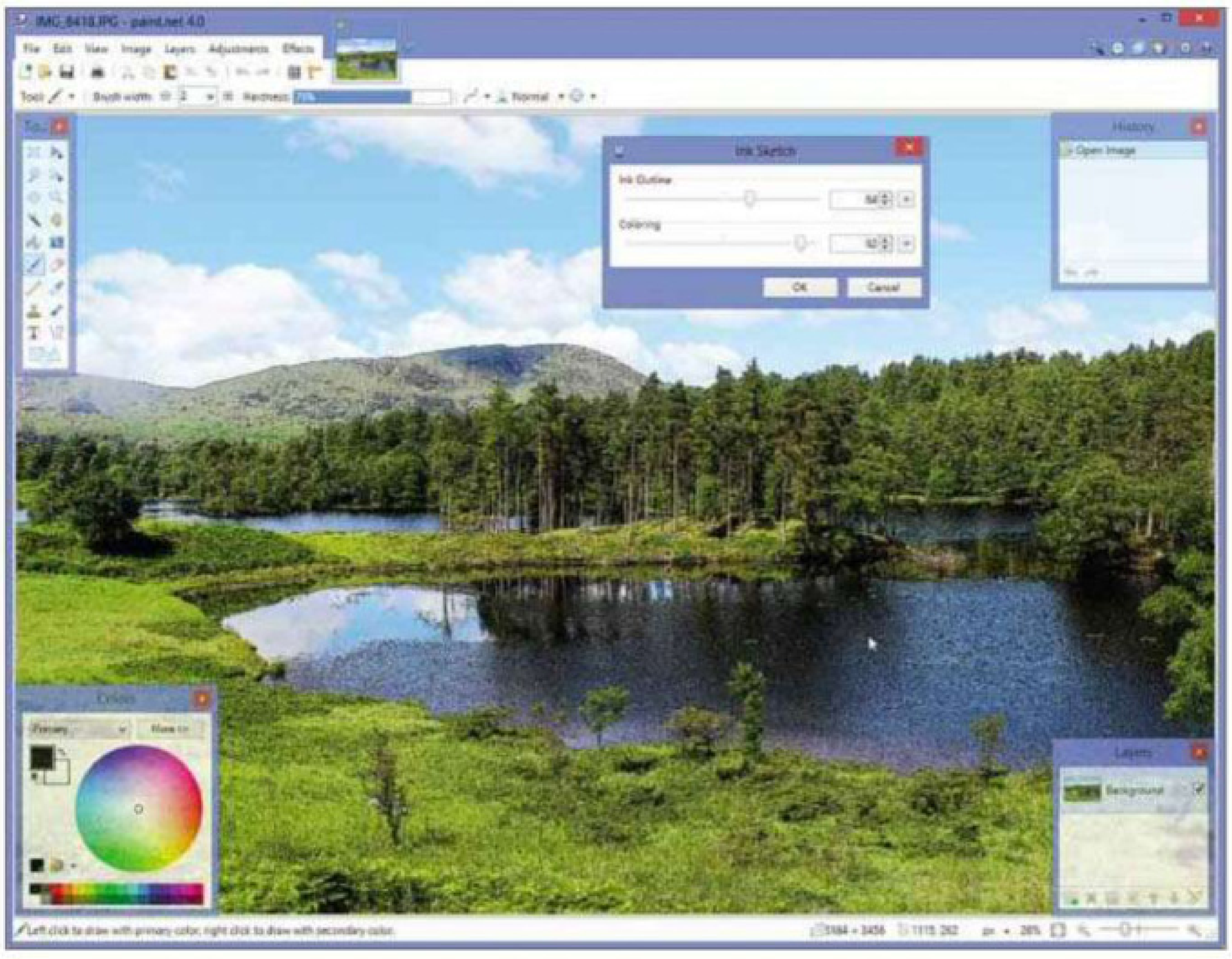
KEY FEATURES
Automatic back-up ■ Unlimited storage ■ Recover deleted files for up to 32 days ■ 256-bit AES encryption ■ Back up any combination of files and folders ■ UK-based ■ Copies of files kept forever ■ Back-up logging

Best Free Software

IMAGE EDITOR

Paint.NET 4

getpaint.net
Min requirements: Windows 7 SP1/8+
File size: 6MB



Fans of the excellent free image editor Paint.NET have had to wait a very long time for a new version of the program, but six years after the last major release, the software's developer, dotPDN LLC, has finally rolled out a major update.

The new Paint.NET is only available for Windows 7 and 8+ (sadly, XP and Vista users will miss out), and offers a wealth of new features and a refreshed user interface. The old Aero/glass look has been replaced with a modern flat design, and although some tools have been removed or relocated, the interface doesn't deviate far from what regular users will be accustomed to.

As well as cosmetic changes, there are lots of new features, but one of the biggest improvements lies under the bonnet, with the introduction of a powerful new rendering engine which massively improves performance. Large images are handled better now, and memory usage has been reduced.



Elsewhere, image selections are now anti-aliased, which improves the quality around the edges of selected content (you can disable this), and the outline is rendered using 'dancing ants' animation, which makes it easier to see the selected area. There's a new Shapes tool, which offers 29 different choices; an improved Layers tool; and a new 'vignette' photo effect. We also like that you can now reorder thumbnails using drag and drop, which saves time when organising pictures.

MINI WORKSHOP | Combine images using Paint.NET 4



1 Paint.NET 4's interface will be familiar if you've used previous versions, but there are some changes. Most notably, the image thumbnail list 1 has been moved up slightly and aligned to the left. The Utilities, Window and Help tabs have been removed, and the features they offered are now available via buttons in the top-right corner. 2



2 To combine an image with the one you have open in Paint.NET, drag and drop the second shot onto the main program window. You'll be asked if you want to open it, or add it as a new layer to the current image. Select the latter option and the new photo will appear over the old one. Both will be shown in the Layers window. 1



3 Click the Layer Properties button 1 and use the opacity slider 2 to reveal the layer underneath. Reorder layers by clicking and dragging. To add a feature from one image to another, carefully rub over the area with the eraser tool 3 to remove the part of the new layer that's over it. When that's done, reset the opacity.

This fortnight's top new software downloads to help you make the most of your PC, and they're all FREE



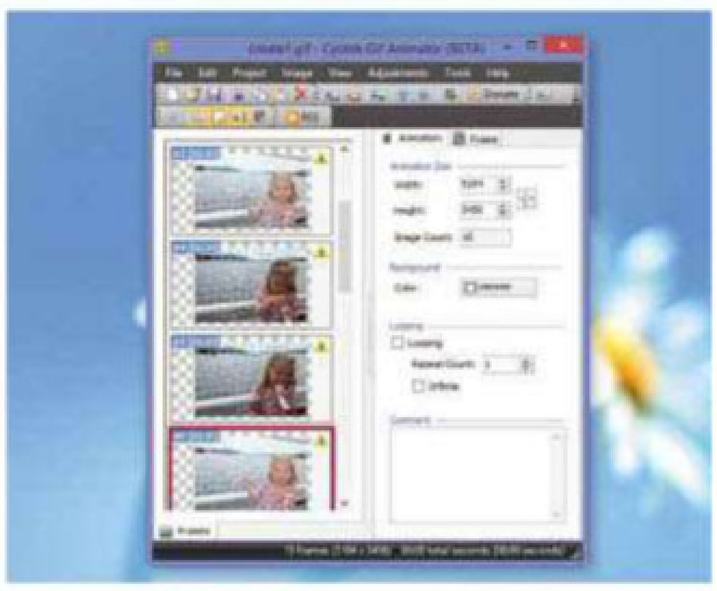
BROWSER

Internet Explorer Developer Channel

devchannel.modern.ie

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 146MB

If you use Chrome or Firefox, you'll probably be aware that you can download beta and developer versions of browsers that let you play around with features that aren't yet ready for general release. The Developer Channel version of Internet Explorer works in a similar way. Once it's installed, you'll be able to see what new features and changes are being worked on, and the really good news is that you can run it alongside your existing version of IE.



GIF MAKER

Cyotek Gif Animator

bit.ly/cyotekgif349

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 4.1MB

GIFs were introduced by CompuServe way back in 1987, and they are still incredibly popular. Twitter even added support for the animated image format last month. Cyotek Gif Animator lets you create your own GIFs from a series of still images. You can also use it to modify existing animations, extract frames and perform batch operations. The beta version is free though you can donate during the installation process.



AUDIO CONVERTER

TAudioConverter

bit.ly/tac349

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 21MB

TAudioConverter lets you quickly convert audio files from one format to another. It supports all the main audio types, including MP3, WAV, FLAC, OGG and AAC, and it can extract and encode audio streams from video files and rip CDs, too. The program gives total control over options such as the encoding method and bitrate, and you can apply filters and custom tags. It can convert up to 16 files simultaneously.

New Windows 8 Apps

The Mirror

bit.ly/mirror349

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 5.2MB

This app lets you read the full *Daily Mirror* newspaper every weekday for free, and you can download copies for offline viewing. Crosswords and Sudokus are available to play directly in the app.



Scribd

bit.ly/scribd349

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 391KB

The official Scribd app provides access to more than 400,000 books from over 900 publishers. You can browse editorial collections and personalised recommendations, but it costs $8.99 (£5.28) a month to subscribe to the service.



PicsArt – Photo Studio

bit.ly/picsart349

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 12.1MB

This photo-editing app offers a range of tools and effects, and includes a collage maker, a drawing tool and social support, which lets you share your creations.



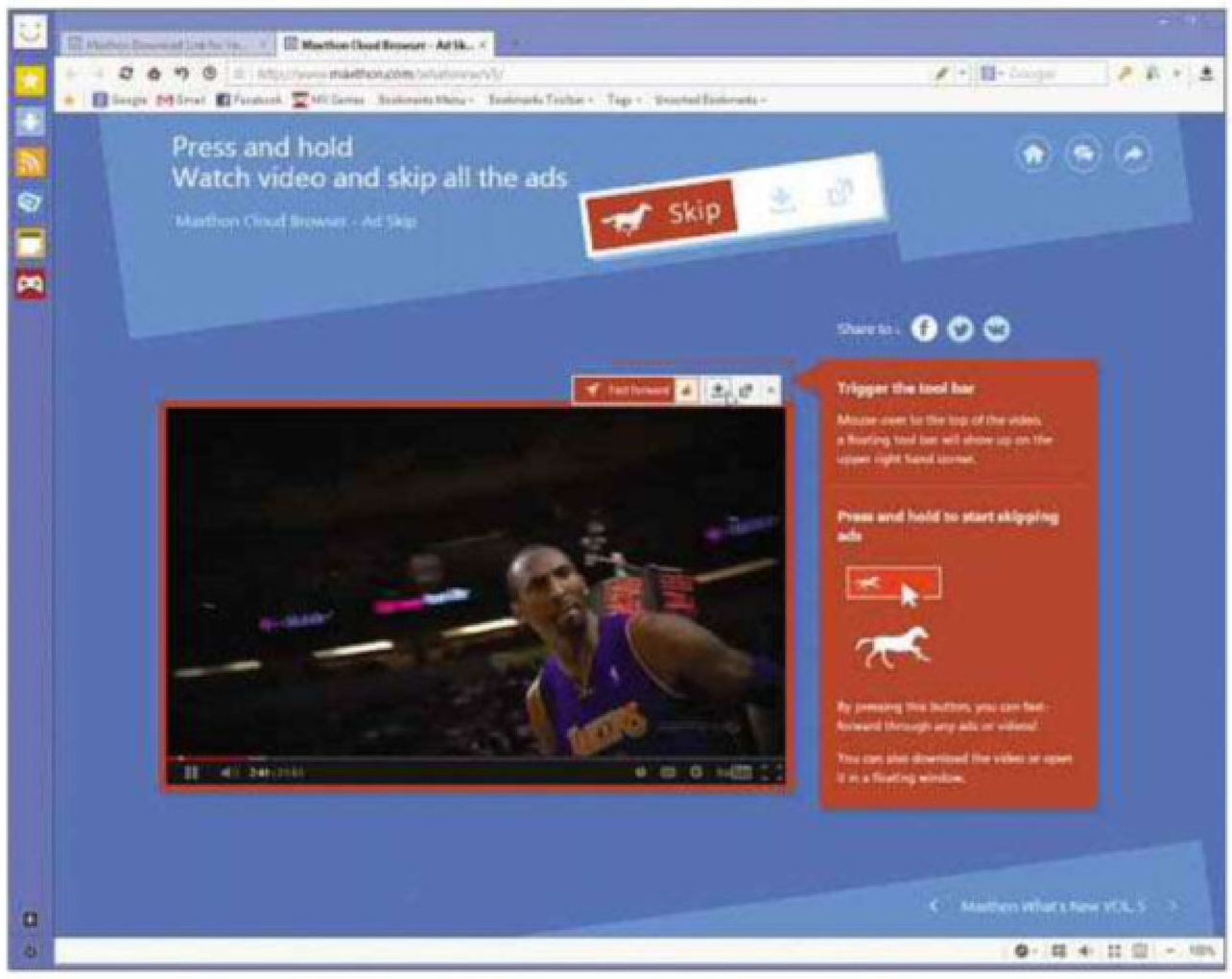
Best Free Software

BROWSER

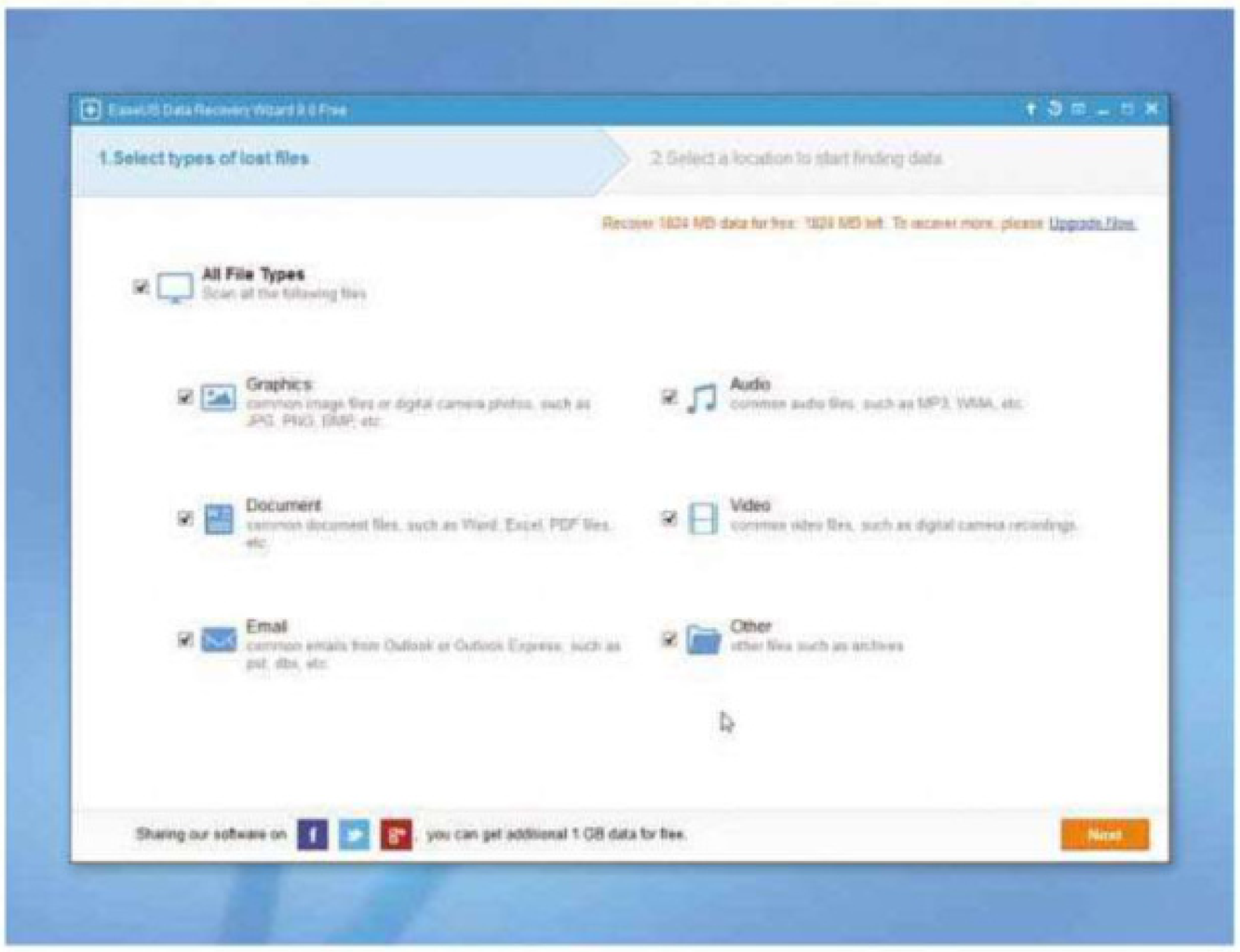
Maxthon Ad-Skipper

usa.maxthon.com/ad-skip

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 37.1MB



If you watch a lot of videos online, you might be interested in this new browser from Maxthon, which lets you quickly fast-forward through advertisements, including ones that normally can't be skipped. When the video starts playing, move your mouse to the top to display the floating toolbar, then press and hold the Skip button to begin fast-forwarding. Playback is impressively smooth and you can download any video or open it in a separate window. The browser is designed to deliver high-quality performance and supports all the major video codecs including h.264, VP8, OggTheora and WebM. Ad-Skipper also offers all the usual browser features, including bookmarking and tabbed browsing.



DATA RECOVERY

EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free 8

bit.ly/datarecovery349

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ or Mac OS X **File size:** 5.7MB

Even if you regularly back up your files, it's still possible to lose vital personal data by accidentally deleting them. However, by using EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free, you should be able to recover some – if not all – of your files. The latest version is the easiest to use yet – just launch the program, choose what you're looking for and where, then scan your device. You can then preview and recover the files found by the program, although the free version can only recover a maximum of 1GB.

You should avoid installing the software on the drive you want to recover data from, or you risk overwriting the files.

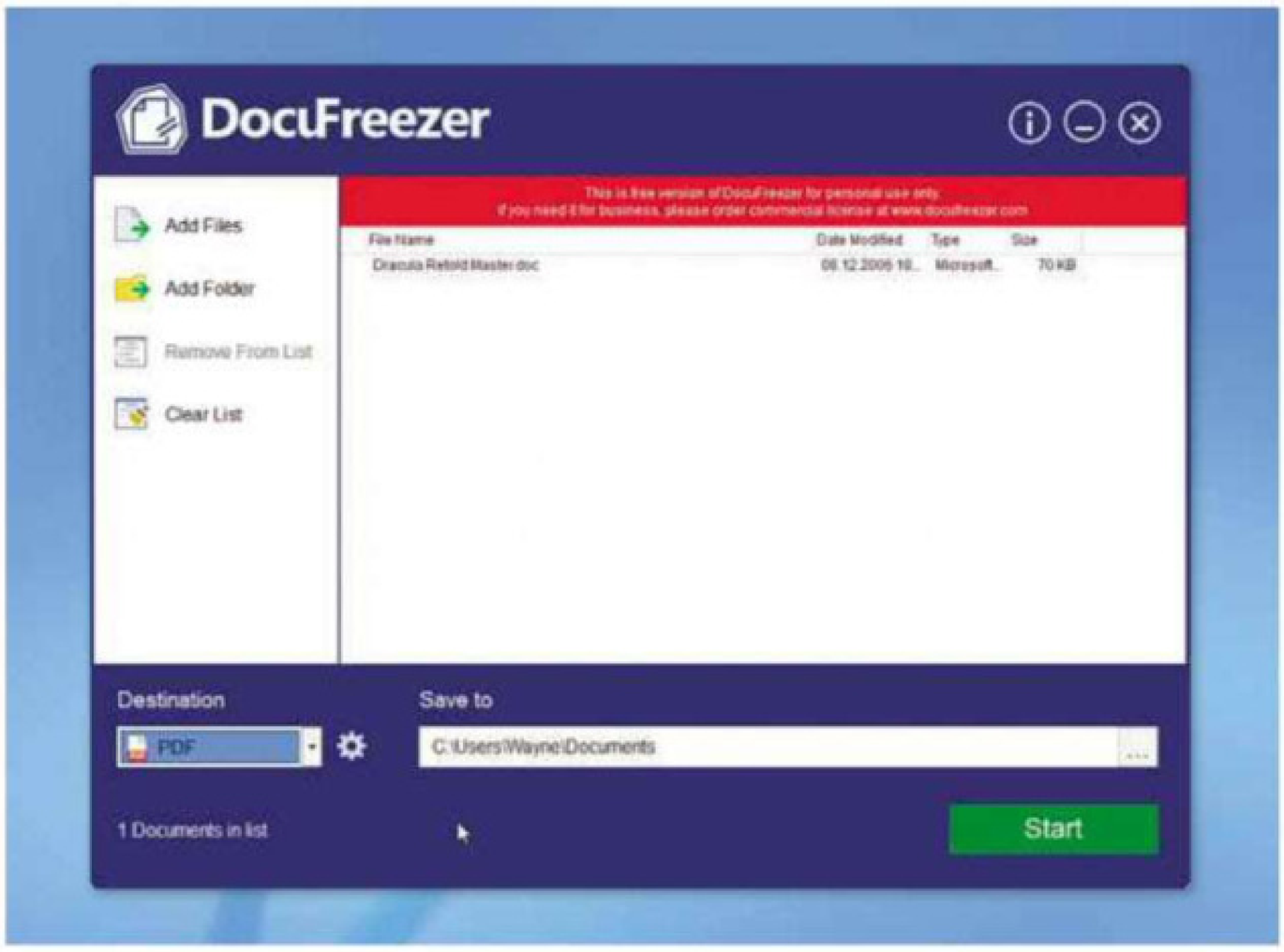
FILE CONVERTER

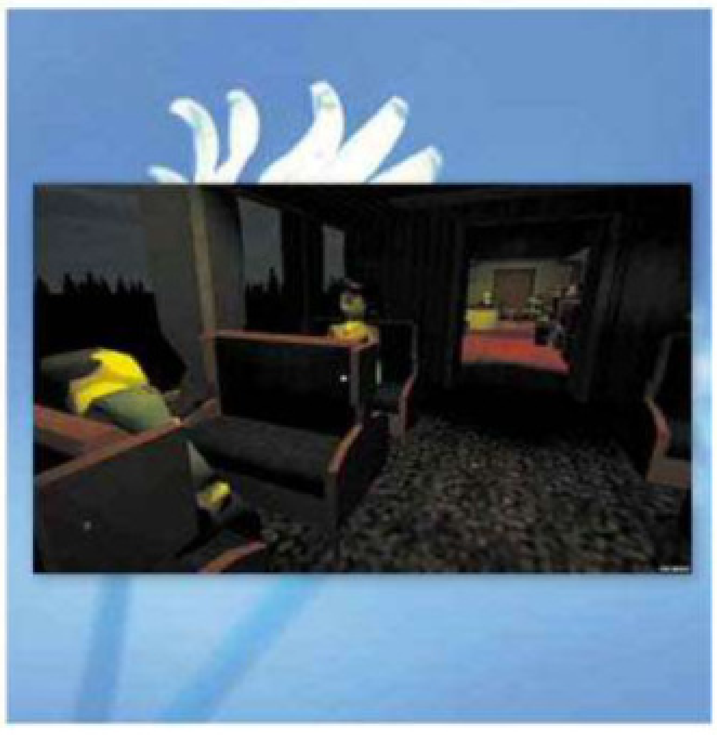
DocuFreezer

www.docufreezer.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 7.9MB

Sharing a document relies on the other person having the right program to open it, and there's no guarantee it will look exactly as it does on your PC unless you present it as a PDF or image file. DocuFreezer solves this problem by converting any document into a range of formats including PDF, PNG, JPG and TIF. Just drag the document(s) to the program window (you can also drop folders containing documents), pick the format you want to convert to and click Start. Note that DocuFreezer requires you to have Office 2010 (or later) installed if you want to convert files that were created using Microsoft's Office suite, such as Word documents.





GAME

Grim Express

bit.ly/grimexpress349

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 23.7MB

Grim Express is a short first-person adventure game set aboard a train. One of the passengers has been murdered and it's down to you to identify the killer. You can collect clues and question suspects, and once you think you know who the murderer is, report your findings to the inspector.

✗ Don't install...

QuickTime

www.apple.com/uk/quicktime

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ or Mac OS X **File size:** 40MB

QuickTime was once the most popular video software, which seems odd when you consider how slow, bloated and frustrating it is, often failing to fulfil its main purpose of playing videos. It works better on Macs, apparently, so maybe Apple is just determined to annoy Windows users.



...Install this instead ✓

VLC Media Player

www.videolan.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+, Mac OS X or Linux **File size:** 22MB

If there's anything VLC Media Player can't do with videos, we've yet to discover it. Not only can it handle pretty much any media file without the need to install additional codecs, it also lets you convert files from one format to another, stream media from your PC to other devices, and manage and sync subtitles. You can also adjust the playing speed of videos and use a range of plug-ins to add more features.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite programs



IMAGE VIEWER

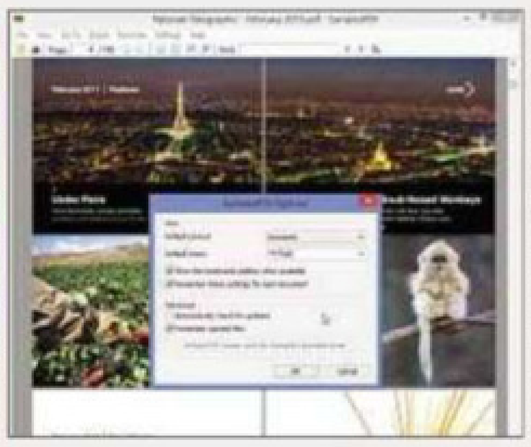
IrfanView 4.38

www.irfanview.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 1.8MB

IrfanView is a tiny image viewer and editor, but it comes packed with features. This update adds several new choices to the Options menu; new views to the Thumbnails window; and a new 'IrfanView Shell Extension' feature on the PlugIns website. It also improves the program's print function.



PDF READER

SumatraPDF 2.5.2

bit.ly/sumatra349

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 2.7MB

As well as displaying PDF files and ebooks in all the main formats, the open-source software SumatraPDF can also handle comic book files. This updated build uses less memory when rendering these files, which can often cause crashes in other PDF-reading software. It also fixes a few PDF display problems.



SYSTEM CLEANER

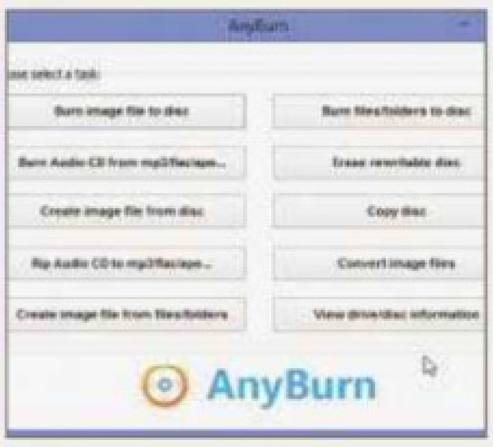
CCleaner v4.15

www.piriform.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 4.6MB

The latest version of Piriform's popular system tool has fixed some "minor" bugs and can clean up after two additional browsers – Yandex and the 64-bit version of Chrome – plus various other programs including SnagIt 12 and Nitro PDF Reader. The software has been optimised with improved memory usage.



DISC WRITER

Free AnyBurn 2.3

www.anyburn.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 1MB

The changes in the newest build of this free disc-authoring tool are mostly minor and comprise bug fixes and enhancements. The one big change is the addition of support for the BDXL format, which is a high-capacity triple- and quadruple-layer Blu-ray variant intended for commercial use. ■

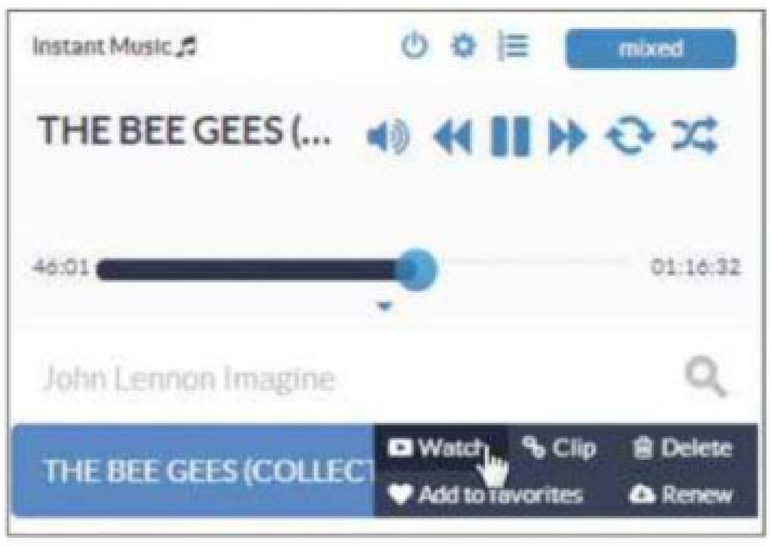
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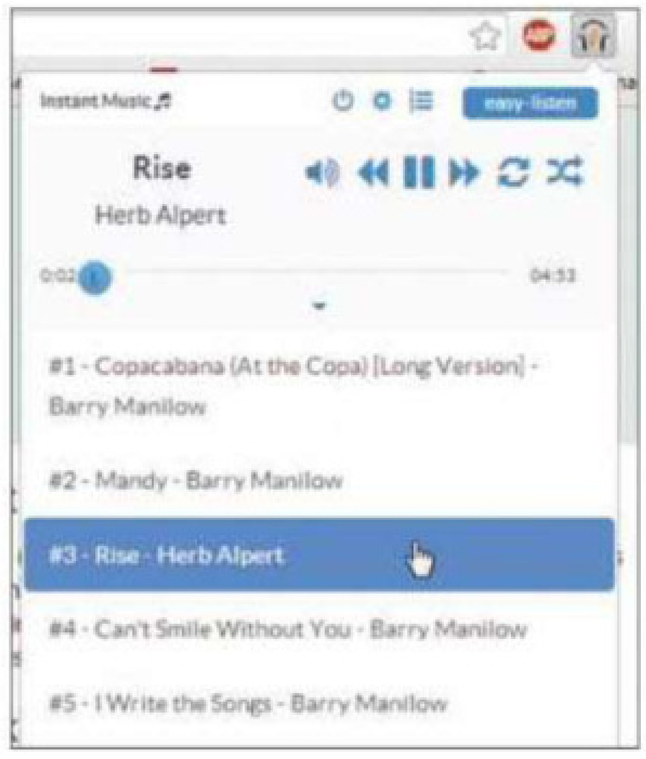
Best New Browser Tools

CHROME

Discover and listen to new music for free

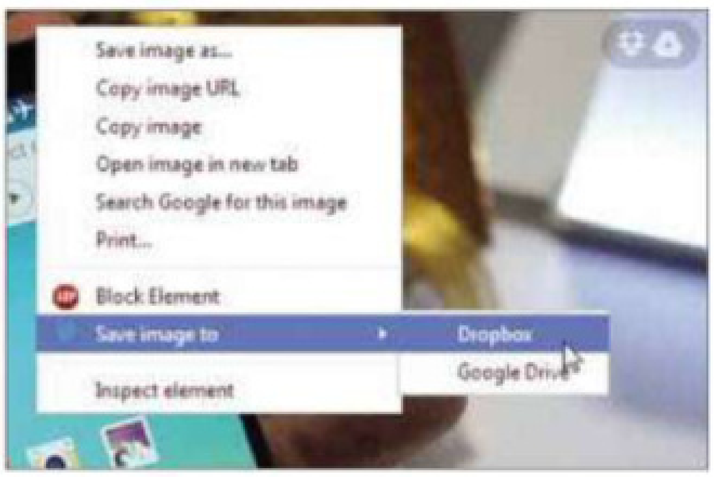
If you're tired of playing the same old songs from your music collection, you can use the brilliant Chrome extension Instant Music (instantmusicapp.com) to stream new tunes. It's small, fast and very easy to use: just click the toolbar button, select a genre such as pop, rock or easy listening and choose how many songs to include in your playlist – from 10 to 100. You can then listen to them from wherever you are on the web; shuffle, skip and delete tracks as you see fit; and use keyboard shortcuts to control playback, for example Ctrl+Shift+X to play and pause tunes. Instant Music sources the most popular charts from iTunes, Billboard and Melon and lets you click Watch to view their videos on YouTube. It's a marvellous, must-have extension for music fans.





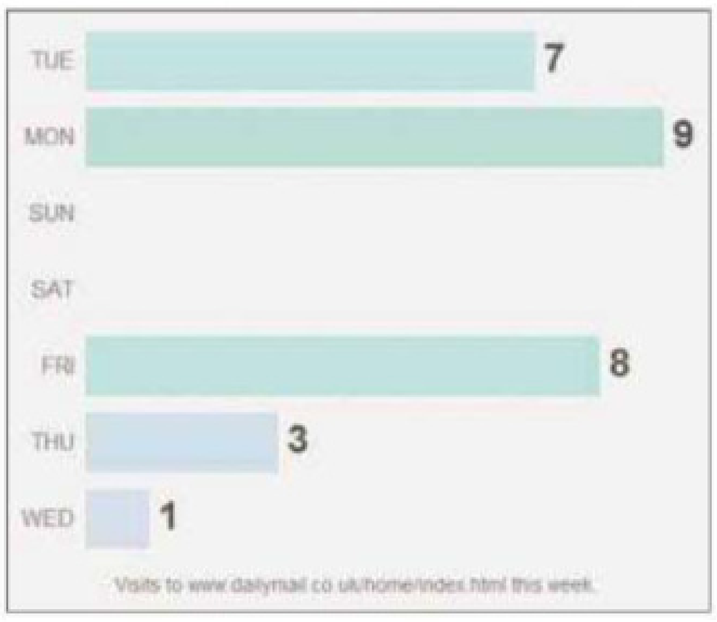
Save web content to cloud-storage services

In our last issue, we recommended the Chrome extension Save to Google Drive (bit.ly/save348) as an easy way to save online content to your Drive account, without needing to download it first. The new add-on Ballloon (bit.ly/ballloon349) – yes, that's three 'l's – goes one better by letting you save images, links and other files to Dropbox, too. When you see something of interest on a web page, simply right-click it and choose the storage service you want to save it to. Alternatively, to grab a picture, just hover your mouse over it and click the Drive or Dropbox icons that appear in the top-right corner.



Find out which sites you visit too often

Do you spend too much time checking Mail Online for news of the latest scandals? Find out by installing Back Again (bit.ly/back349), a simple but revealing add-on that counts how many times you've visited the same web page. When you're viewing a site, Back Again's toolbar button displays the number of previous views that day. Click the button for a weekly breakdown of your visits to the page. You might be surprised at how often you return to certain sites and be shocked into using your time more constructively!



Install extensions not in the Chrome Web Store

Google recently removed many extensions from the Chrome Web Store, but you can still install them if you use a workaround. First, click the menu button in the top-right corner of the browser, go to Tools, Extensions and tick the box labelled 'Developer mode' at the top of the page. Next, find a website hosting the removed extension and download the CRX file to your Desktop (you may need to right-click it and choose 'Save as'). Drag the file to Chrome's Extensions page and click Add when prompted.

Always be very cautious about installing add-ons from outside the Web Store because they may put your browser at risk. Make sure you read the permissions carefully.

Don't get tricked by website privacy policies

Privacy Icons (disconnect.me/icons) is a useful new Chrome (and Firefox) add-on from Disconnect, which simplifies confusing website privacy policies. It uses colour-coded icons to show you whether a site will collect your data, track your location and leave your details vulnerable to the Heartbleed bug. The colours change according to the icon, but red usually means "yes, with no choice to opt out" while green indicates that a site does a good job of respecting your privacy.



This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer and more

FIREFOX

Copy web content without the formatting

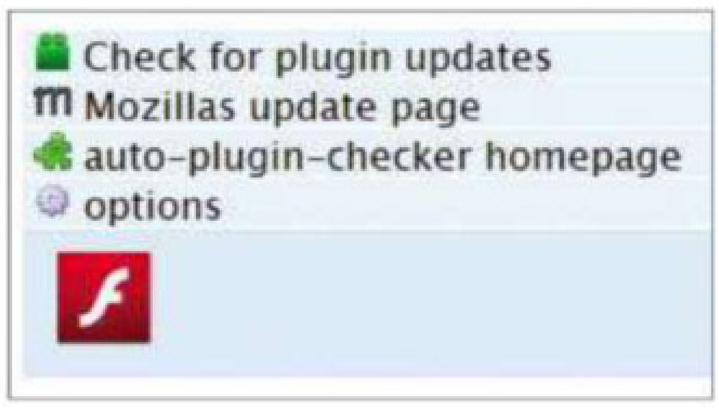
Sometimes, when you copy and paste text from a web page, it comes with extra spaces, special characters and other annoying formatting, often relating to different fonts and colours. One way around this problem is to use the updated Firefox add-on Copy Plain Text 2 (bit.ly/copy349), which lets you copy and paste without the junk, simply by highlighting the text, right-clicking and choosing 'Copy as Plain Text'.



Go into the add-on's options to decide which unwanted content to filter, including extra empty lines, and to reformat special characters. There's also a useful new feature that lets you set the text-free option as the default copy action to keep all your pasting neat and tidy.

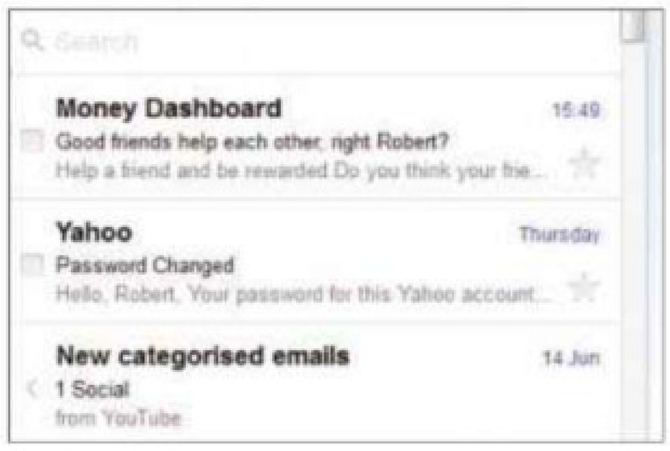
Automatically check for plug-in updates

Browser plug-ins such as Flash are often vulnerable to security exploits, so it's essential to keep them up to date. The new add-on Auto-plugin-checker (bit.ly/auto349) prevents you from leaving Firefox unprotected by informing you as soon as updates become available. You can choose how it notifies you and how frequently it checks for updates, such as whenever Firefox starts or every 24 hours. Although the add-on doesn't update the plug-ins for you, which could potentially pose a security risk, you can do so yourself by clicking the plug-in's icon to open its website.



Get notified when new Gmail messages arrive

Fastest Notifier for Gmail (bit.ly/fastest349) lets you know when you have a new message in your inbox, so you don't have to keep checking it yourself. As well as notifying you about the arrival, and number, of unread messages, it lets you search your inbox and reply to and forward messages from its pop-up window. You can also delete and archive messages; easily switch between the Primary, Social and Promotions categories; and turn on your out-of-office reply. Best of all, you only need to sign into Gmail the first time you use the add-on.



Queue links to open in new tabs

Rather than opening several tabs and using lots of system memory, try a new add-on called Open Link in Silent Tab (bit.ly/silent349). This lets you right-click a link on a page to open it in a new tab, but it doesn't actually load the page until you click the tab. This means you can queue pages to read later without wasting system resources.



OTHER BROWSERS

Sync your passwords in IE across devices

Chrome and Firefox have long offered the ability to sync your passwords across devices, and now Microsoft has added the feature to Internet Explorer 11. This means that when you enter a password in IE11 on your Windows PC, it will automatically sync with other devices running the browser, including Windows Phones. IE11 is also now able to detect login pages, prompting you to save passwords in the browser so they can be filled in automatically in future.

Clean up Opera at the end of each session

Protect your privacy from online trackers and people who share your computer by installing the new Opera add-on Close & Clean (bit.ly/close349). When you click its toolbar button, it closes the browser and performs the clean-up tasks of your choice, including deleting your cookies, passwords and browsing and download history. You can choose to obliterate data from only the past hour, 24 hours or week, or go all the way back to the "dawn of time".

Install Pale Moon on your Android device

The fantastic Firefox alternative Pale Moon is now available for Android, albeit as a public beta that may be slightly buggy. The app resembles Firefox for Android, and adds extra features such as reflowing text by double-tapping and syncing with the Desktop version of Pale Moon. The app isn't yet available on Google Play, but you can download it from the Pale Moon forums (bit.ly/pale349). However, you'll need to enable installation from unknown sources on your Android device.

Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

BROWSER

Opera Mini

bit.ly/opera349

Min requirements: iOS 7

Size: 12MB

UPDATED

The iOS version of Opera's Mini mobile browser has received a major overhaul, offering a completely new interface with three different browsing modes. The app is well known for its classic Mini mode, which uses compression technology to cut your data usage by up to 90 per cent – a very handy feature if you only have a small data allowance. However, it now has a new Turbo mode that gives you the best of both worlds, offering a full web experience while still saving you from downloading up to 50 per cent of the data. Of course, if you're using a Wi-Fi connection, you can turn Data Savings to Off and load all pages at the highest possible quality.



The new design makes it easy to share pages or save them for viewing offline, while the Discover page lets you browse top news stories from around the web. Switching between browsing modes is quick and simple and, by default, Opera Mini loads new tabs in the background, so that you can carry on reading while the page is downloaded. Combined with its handy Speed Dial feature and built-in QR code scanner and generator, there's plenty here to tempt you away from Safari. Hopefully, the Android version will be updated soon, too.



Our rating ★★★★★

TOOL

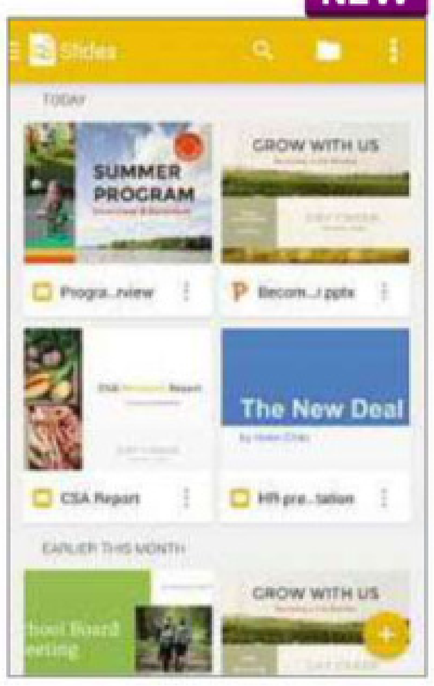
NEW

Google Slides

bit.ly/slides349

Min requirements: Android 4.0

Size: Varies with device



Following the release of the Google Docs and Google Sheets apps earlier this year, Google Slides lets you create and edit slideshows on your Android device. Like the other apps, Slides lets you invite friends, family and colleagues to work on files collaboratively, and it is also fully compatible with PowerPoint files. By default, new slideshows are saved to your device, so you can carry on working even without an internet connection. As you'd expect, the functionality is much more limited than the Desktop web-based version, but we found it very straightforward to edit text and add slides, which is all you should ever need when you're away from your PC. If you only want to view your slideshows, you can do so using the Google Drive app for Android.



Our rating ★★★★☆

SOCIAL

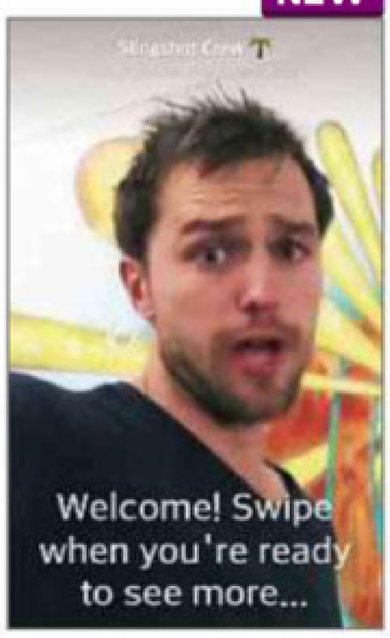
NEW

Slingshot

bit.ly/slingshot349

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 7

Size: 5.2MB



Slingshot works in a very similar way to Snapchat, letting you share automatically expiring photos with your friends. However, it has two distinct differences. The first is that it lets you share video clips as well as photos, while the second is perhaps much more significant – in order to see any content that is 'slung' at you, you must first sling something back at the person who sent it. Although we found the app easy to set up, and its Facebook integration makes finding your friends very straightforward, we found this defining feature somewhat problematic, since it forces you to respond to something before you've even had a chance to see it.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android, iOS and Windows phones and tablets, and smart TVs

TOOL

NEW

Salient Eye

bit.ly/eye349

Min requirements: Android 2.2

Size: Varies with device



Salient Eye lets you turn an unused Android device into an alarm system. This innovative app uses the camera on your smartphone or tablet to detect motion, making a noise if an intruder is spotted. What's more, it takes pictures upon detection, which are automatically sent to you via email or SMS. The app works even when the device's screen is turned off, and its developers claim that it will run for up to 10 hours without a power supply. If you're worried about someone breaking in, this is an attractive alternative to splashing out on a home CCTV system that won't cost you a penny.

Our rating ★★★★☆

LAUNCHER

UPDATED

Yahoo Aviate Launcher

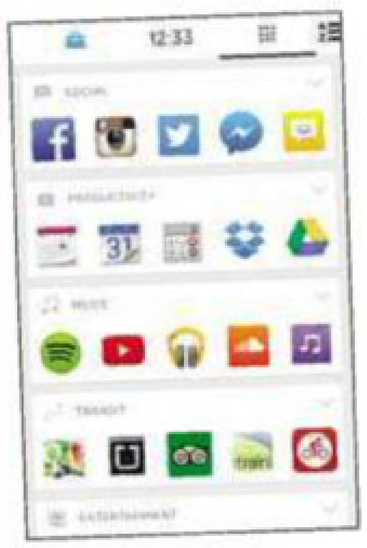
bit.ly/aviate349

Min requirements: Android (varies with device)

Size: Varies with device



Launchers let you change the look and feel of your Android device by modifying your Home screen, dock and app drawer. Recently acquired by Yahoo, Aviate Launcher claims to simplify your experience by automatically organising your phone and presenting you with the right apps and information according to where you are and what you're doing.



We found the launcher incredibly straightforward to set up and it used our current settings to determine which apps we were likely to use most often, intelligently sorting them into categories. We liked the built-in widgets for events, weather and news on the Today page, and also found the integrated local business listings very handy. Although it provides a radically different experience to stock Android, Aviate will suit those looking for a launcher that organises things for you while providing a number of integrated services.

Our rating ★★★★☆

MEDIA

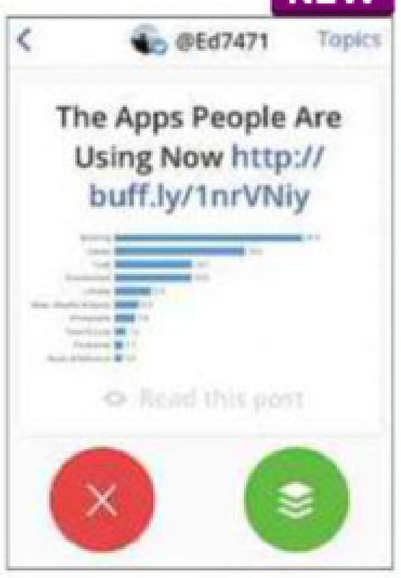
NEW

Daily By Buffer

bit.ly/daily349

Min requirements: iOS 7.0

Size: 10.7 MB



Daily By Buffer makes it easier for you to find great content online by suggesting articles and letting you decide which ones you want to read. Swipe right to save an article, swipe left to skip it or tap the link to read it there and then. The content is divided into a slightly odd choice of categories including Marketing, Inspiration and Design, but when we selected View All, the suggested articles were mostly quite engaging. Although we were able to quickly sign into the app using our Twitter account, we needed to download the original Buffer app, too, to get the most out of it.

Our rating ★★★★☆

PHOTO

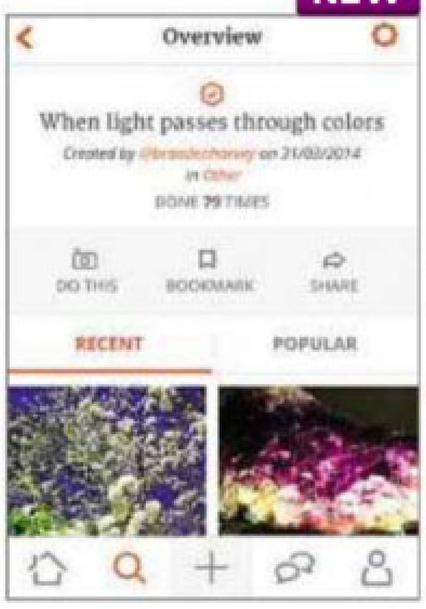
NEW

Ok Do This

bit.ly/okdothis349

Min requirements: iOS 7.0

Size: 42.2 MB

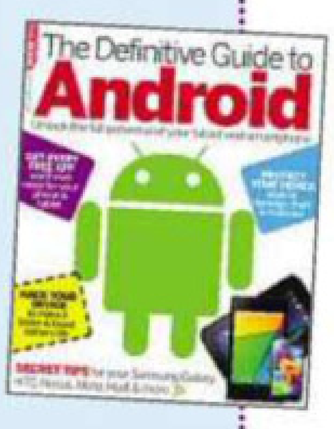


Ok Do This is a photo-sharing app that encourages you to share the inspiration behind your composition as well as the image itself. By attaching 'DOs' to your photos, you can inspire other users to do the same as you, whether that is a matter of capturing a cloud with personality or photographing your own feet. Like Instagram, Ok Do This provides a range of editing tools and filters to help you modify your photographs, but its seven different aspect ratios and the omission of hashtags in favour of 'DOs' makes it feel like an altogether new experience.

Our rating ★★★★★

GET THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

Our new Android MagBook is packed with 148 pages of workshops, tips and advice to help you unlock the full potential of your tablet and smartphone.



Discover how to:

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- **Install great apps for everything you need**
- **Keep all your personal data private and safe**
- **Stream music, movies and TV for free**
- **Fix frustrating problems quickly and easily**
- **Use secret hacks to improve your device**

Order The Definitive Guide to Android now from Amazon at bit.ly/guidetoandroid

Best Free Apps

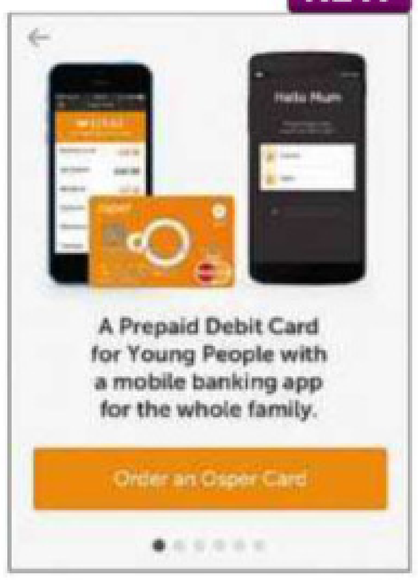
MONEY

NEW

Osper

bit.ly/osper349

Min requirements: Android 2.3.3, iOS 5
Size: 3.3 MB



Available in the UK for the first time, Osper is a money-management system for young people that uses pre-paid debit cards. After loading money onto an Osper card, your child can use it at cash machines, in shops, online and even abroad. The Osper app then lets you track your child's spending, but also helps him or her to budget. Since the card is pre-paid, there's no risk of the account being overdrawn, and should you need to lock the account, you can do so from the app immediately. In order to protect your child, the Osper card blocks transactions with bars, off licences and online casinos.

Our rating ★★★★☆

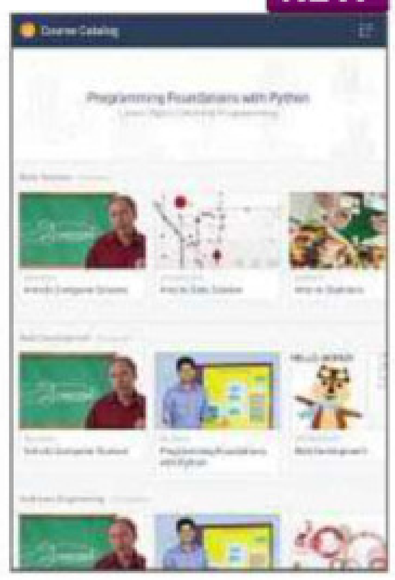
WEB DESIGN

NEW

Udacity – Learn Programming

bit.ly/udacity349

Min. requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 3.6 MB



New to Android, Udacity is designed to help you learn HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Python and Java, as well as other programming languages. The courses, which are taught by industry experts from Facebook, Google, Cloudera and MongoDB, cover everything from programming basics to more advanced topics that will help you manage large amounts of data. Udacity lets you watch lectures, write code and take quizzes, and there's even an option to download the courses so that you can access content offline. The app's developers have announced that it will soon support Chromecast, so you'll be able to watch lectures on a big screen.

Our rating ★★★★☆

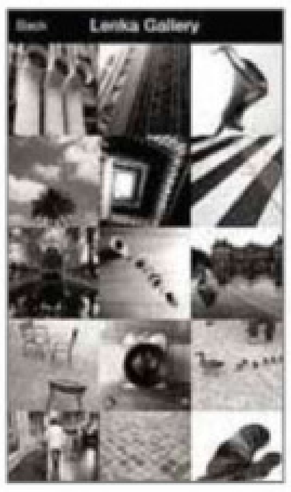
5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lenka

bit.ly/lenka349

Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 1.4 MB **Price:** £1.99



Developed by world-renowned photographer Kevin Abosch, this simple camera app is designed to let you take beautiful black and white photographs. In keeping with its traditional theme, Lenka stops you from using your iPhone's flash or front camera.

PDF EDITOR

PDF Expert 5

bit.ly/pdfexpert349

Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 61.7MB **Price:** £6.99



PDF Expert is a powerful tool for reading, annotating or editing PDFs on your iPad or iPhone, including filling PDF forms. The latest version of the app brings new functionality to the iPhone, including freehand drawing and continuous scrolling.

GAME

Dinosaur Mix

bit.ly/dinosaur349

Min requirements: iOS 5
Size: 70.9MB **Price:** £1.99



This colourful game lets you build your own dinosaur, watch it come to life, and then explore the forest or volcanic plains in search of food. Created by Cowly Owl, Dinosaur Mix is intuitive and fun and will provide hours of entertainment for your children.

WEATHER

AlertsPro

bit.ly/alerts349

Min requirements: Android 2.3, iOS 7
Size: 2.3MB **Price:** £1.43



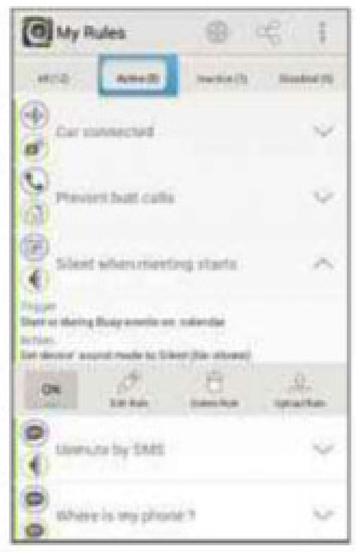
If you live in a region affected by extreme weather, this app could prove invaluable. AlertsPro uses a simple colour-coded system to give you location-based weather alerts, and its sharing feature means you can keep your loved ones up to date, too.

PHONES

AutomateIt Pro

bit.ly/automatepro349

Min requirements: Android 2.2
Size: 9.3MB **Price:** £1.43



This updated app makes your life easier by automating tasks on your Android device. One feature we particularly like is Unmute by SMS, which makes it possible to find your phone even when it's buried deep beneath a sofa cushion!

Lenka | PDF Expert 5 | Dinosaur Mix | AlertsPro | Automateit Pro

Best New TV Apps

TV & FILM

Blinkbox

www.blinkbox.com

Min requirements: Varies with device

Tesco's video-on-demand service has launched a dedicated app for the Xbox One. This has all the features of Blinkbox's other apps – the ability to browse and buy from a vast range of films and TV shows, and filter titles by Best Sellers, New Releases, Top Selling and Genre. The app also supports the Xbox One's Help function to give you relevant customer support. Blinkbox is already on Windows PCs and Macs; Android, iOS and Windows 8 tablets; various smart TVs, set-top boxes and Blu-ray players; and other games consoles, including the PlayStation 3. It will soon be available on Chromecast.



TV & FILM

ITV Player on Now TV

bit.ly/itv349

Min requirements: Now TV Box



If you own one of Sky's Now TV boxes, you can catch up with ITV shows, films and sport from the past 30 days through its new ITV Player app. This gives you access to content from all the broadcaster's channels including ITV2, ITV3, ITV4 and CITV, so you can watch *Coronation Street*, *Midsomer Murders* and *All-Star Mr & Mrs* whenever it suits you. The ITV Player app should be downloaded to your box automatically; if not, try adding it from the app store or, if you still can't find it, go the more sophisticated route and turn the box off and on again. If you don't have a Now TV box, you can buy one from shop.nowtv.com for £9.99. Other apps already available for the device include BBC iPlayer, 4oD, Facebook, Spotify and Vimeo.

MUSIC

Deezer

bit.ly/deezer349

Min requirements: Android (varies with device), iOS 5

Deezer has updated its Android and iOS app to add Chromecast support, so you can stream music from your phone or tablet to your TV. The integration includes a new feature which lets multiple Deezer users interact with the app on one TV at the same time, so you can combine your favourite tracks with those of your friends. You can use your mobile device as a remote control to navigate the Deezer app and search for songs, or let Deezer create a playlist for you, based on your most-played tracks. To use the app with your TV, plug your Chromecast into the HDMI port. You'll need a Deezer Premium subscription, which currently costs £4.99 per month.



✗ Don't install...

Travelodge

bit.ly/travelodge349

Travelodge hotels may be cheap and convenient, but the company's Android app is tatty and second-rate. This is partly because it hasn't been updated for three years, but the real problem is that it offers a terrible user experience. The app is slow, clunky and difficult to navigate; overwhelmed by intrusive adverts; and, maddeningly, prone to crash just as you reach the end of the booking process. Hopefully, Travelodge will soon get round to releasing an app that works properly.



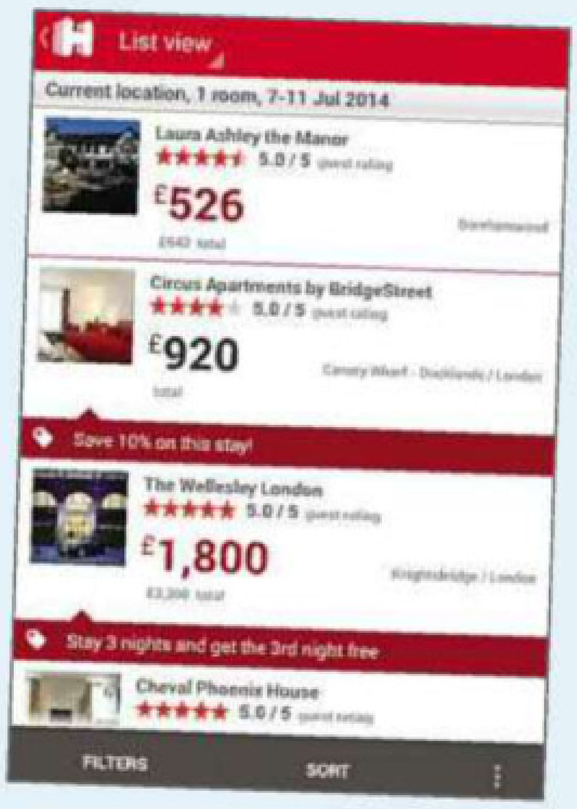
...Install this instead ✓

Hotels.com

uk.hotels.com/deals/mobile_app

Min requirements: Android (varies with device), iOS 7, Windows Phone 8

Covering more than 240,000 hotels worldwide, the Hotels.com app provides a quick and easy way to find somewhere to stay. It's fast, accurate and very easy to use; lets you sort its search results by price, star rating and guest rating; and lets you book a room from your phone or tablet with a minimum of fuss. You can even save 10 per cent by entering the discount code MOBAND1. The app includes some genuinely handy features, letting you access your reservations even when you can't get a mobile signal and view the route from your current location to your hotel with a single touch. Take note, Travelodge! ■



Instant Expert

Our guide to Skybox

Online maps are about to get a lot more detailed, following Google's purchase of satellite firm Skybox. **David Crookes** explains the technology behind it

What is Skybox?

Skybox Imaging (www.skyboximaging.com) specialises in high-resolution satellite imagery and high-definition video, captured using its SkySat-1 satellite, which was sent into space last November. The company has just been bought by Google for $500 million (£294 million).

Aren't sats old hat?

Certainly not. SkySat-1 is 20 times smaller than a traditional satellite and it's effectively pioneering CCTV in the sky. Skybox's plan is to put 24 small, low-power satellites in orbit, 185 miles above ground, offering live video and stills of Earth. So far, it has taken and released photos of a number of locations including Tokyo, Bangkok, Las Vegas and Aleppo in Syria.



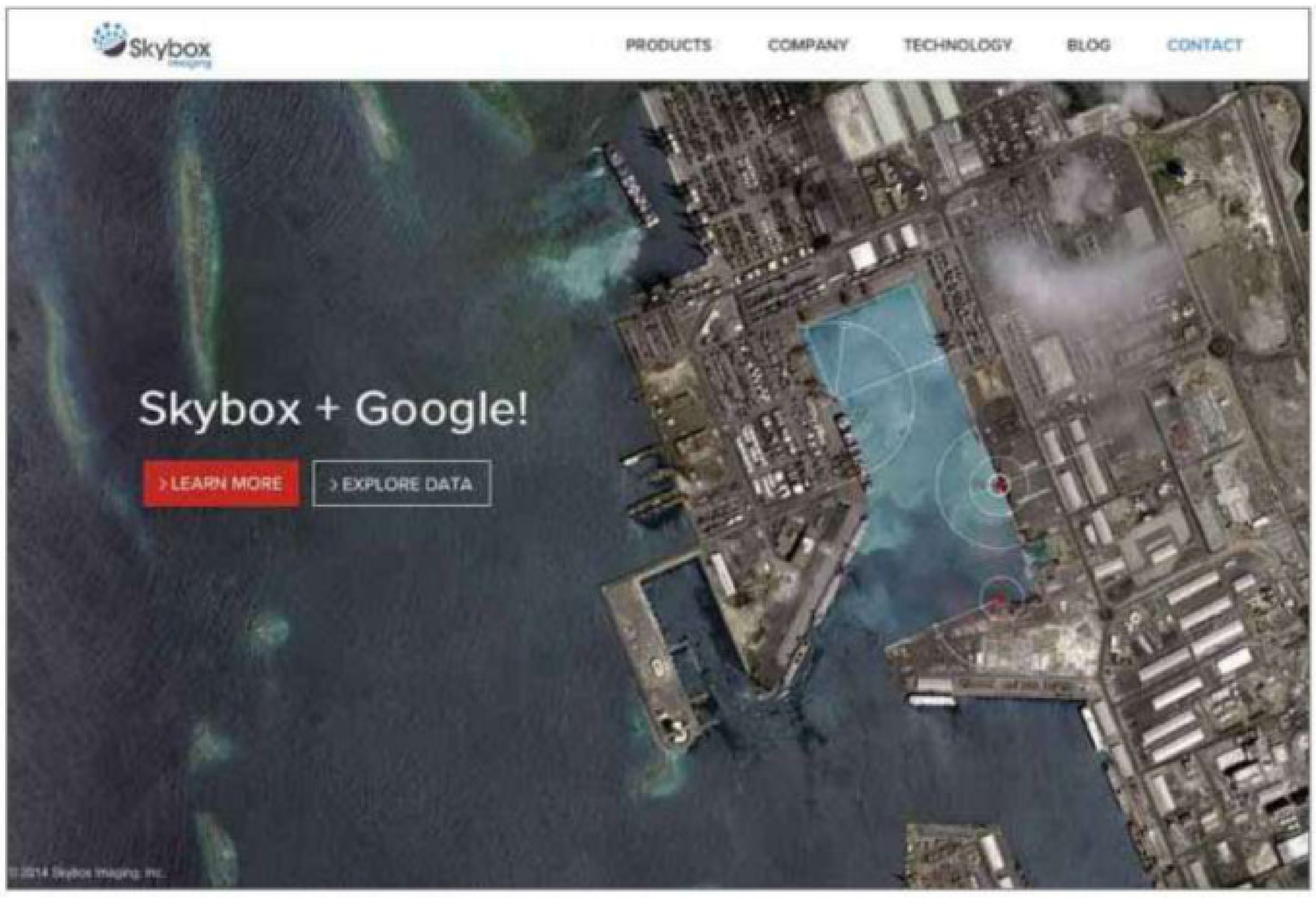
How good are Skybox images?

The images captured using SkySat-1 are incredibly high quality, and Skybox says it can record 90-second video clips at 30 frames per second. These satellites are so powerful that they can follow cars driving along roads and pick out details on roofs.



Skybox images are sharp enough to provide details such as the logo on the roof of Ferrari World in Abu Dhabi

All images: Skybox Imaging, Inc.



Isn't this being done already?

Yes, there are nine satellites in orbit that are used to grab images for commercial companies, such as those operated by Digital Globe (www.digitalglobe.com) and Spatial Energy (www.spatialenergy.com). Google already uses these kinds of firms, but the technology is expensive, which means the imagery is, too.

Why is this a problem?

It hampers the potential of online mapping. For example, although Google Earth's image quality is excellent, it doesn't always get the latest information and, while it displays the best available imagery, the bulk of it is between one and three years old. The data is collected over time and not in real-time, and building developments can happen quickly which puts maps at risk of being out of date.

Why has Google bought Skybox?

Google says the satellites will help to keep Google Maps accurate. It will use the up-to-date imagery of the current satellite and others that are launched (including two later this year) to spot new developments that may require map alterations.

So Google will provide ultra hi-res maps?

Last year, the answer to that question would have been a firm 'no'. There were restrictions on images taken by private satellites able to show features smaller than 50cm. But those restrictions were lifted in June 2014, just days after the Skybox deal was struck. Google is now in a position to offer far greater detail in its maps – and it would be surprising if it didn't eventually make this publicly available. Currently, some Google Maps



Images of London will be much sharper using Skybox's satellites

imagery can be blurry, so images from the Skybox satellites would provide much better quality.

Can we expect real-time mapping?

In time, live mapping will be possible: Skybox's technology has already been likened to a live Google Maps. It would certainly be an improvement on Google Earth, which is a patchwork of old and new images stitched together. Being able to take feeds from a set of satellites constantly circling Earth and covering the entire planet will improve accuracy.

Why would real-time maps be useful?

Apart from the obvious benefit of being able to view maps that are as current as possible, real-time maps could provide useful tools and information. For example, If you wanted to buy a house in an area you're unfamiliar with, you could check live feeds at certain times and note trends, such as the number of cars parked around the area on particular days or how much traffic uses a nearby road or goes in and out of a neighbouring building. You could even check whether your windows are open or closed. There would be potential for military uses, too: Skybox recently showed real-time footage of the troubles in Kiev, Ukraine.



Skybox imaging captured views of the anti-government protests in Kiev

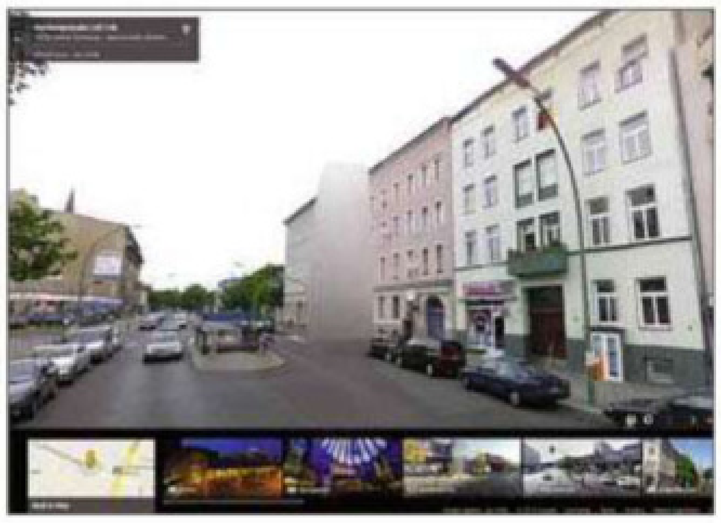
Will better maps benefit businesses?

Companies are bound to find real-time mapping very useful. For instance, they could use the data to discover traffic bottlenecks affecting deliveries and food firms could monitor the state of crops. Amusingly, The Wall Street Journal (online.wsj.com/europe) says Dan Berkenstock, the founder of Skybox, has been focusing his sky eyes on Foxconn factories. These are used by Apple to make its iDevices. Spotting a lot of comings and goings around these factories could, he says, indicate that a new iPhone or iPad is on the way!

Should I be worried about privacy?

Not yet. The technology is still in its infancy and, while the current satellite can circle the Earth 16 times a day, it will be a few years before many more are sent up. That said, Google's vast financial resources could speed things up, and the current year for launch is set for 2018. At that point, privacy could become an issue, just as it continues to be with Google's Street View function (for example, Berlin, Germany, has not been updated since 2008 due to a vast number of blurring requests). The satellites will be able to clearly pick out peoples' faces, identifying who and where they are.

Real-time mapping could also be useful for burglars, allowing them to keep tabs on the comings and goings of residents. Such concerns will hopefully be taken into consideration.



Street View for Berlin has not been updated for 6 years due to requests to blur images

When will higher-res maps be rolled out?

Given the aforementioned questions about privacy, ultra-detailed maps are unlikely to be rolled out to consumers in a hurry, even if the technology is available. But users of Google Maps should soon enjoy greater accuracy and other companies will benefit quickly, too.

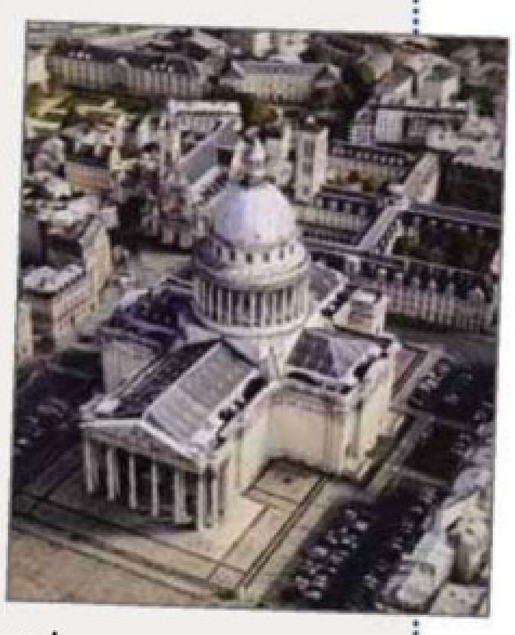
There has been talk of high-res maps being one of Google's infamous "moonshots" – a project that gets kicked around as an idea for a while but never quite manages to take off. However, given the massive potential of the technology, we can't see it being left to wither on the vine.

OTHER MAPPING SERVICES

We look at what Google's competitors are doing to avoid being left behind in the race to produce the best maps

Apple: Flyover city tours

www.apple.com/ios/ios8



With iOS 8 and OS X, you'll be able to experience 'Flyover' tours of some of the world's most notable cities, including Paris (right), New York, San Francisco and Glasgow. You will also be able to zoom in and out, and get up close to a city's landmarks.

Microsoft: Bing Maps Preview

bit.ly/bing349

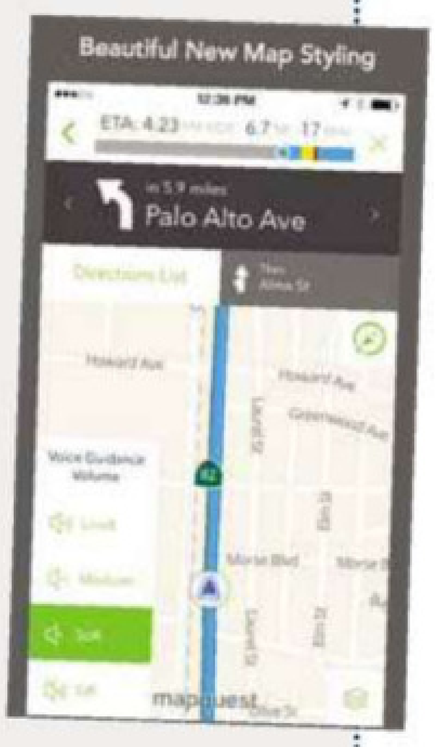
With Bing Maps Preview, you can tap the 'Bird's-eye view' of a key object and see how it looks from street level via the mapping service's StreetSide feature. The image is placed in a small circle on the map for instant reference.



AOL: MapQuest

www.mapquest.com

The app versions of MapQuest give you more accurate estimated times of arrival, which the developers encourage you to share with the people you are about to meet. MapQuest has also been updating its look to provide fresher visuals.







REMOVE HIDDEN JUNK FROM YOUR PHONE & TABLET

COVER FEATURE

Clearing clutter from your mobile devices keeps them running smoothly and safely. **Wayne Williams** explains the easiest free ways to clean and speed up your phones and tablets







It's not just our PCs that can become sluggish over time if we don't perform regular maintenance. Phones and tablets also accumulate clutter from everyday use, which can slow them down and leave them prone to freezes and crashes. Fortunately, there are several ways you can clear the rubbish from your mobile devices – even the stuff you didn't know was there – either manually or by getting an app to do the hard work for you.

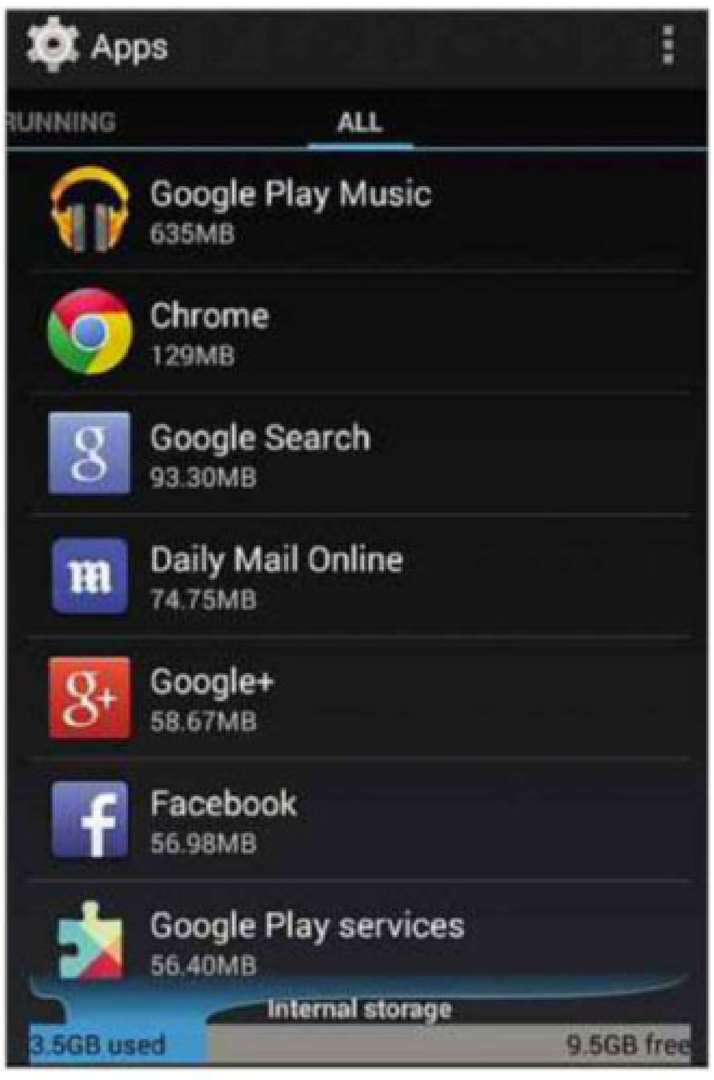
In this feature, we show you how to clean up and speed up your Android and iOS devices, and keep them tidy in the future. We reveal how to find and eliminate space-hogging apps and files; clean app caches that can build up without you noticing; clear call and message history; uncover hidden files; remove malware (and at the same time, protect your device from future infection); schedule regular clean-ups and much more.

SCRAP UNWANTED APPS

Identify apps that are wasting space

The best way to free up space on your phone or tablet is by identifying and deleting the largest apps, many of which you probably no longer use or have forgotten you downloaded in the first place. Games are particularly big space hogs, with some taking 2GB or more, which wastes a significant proportion of your device's internal memory or SD card. To identify the largest apps in Android, go to Settings, Storage and select Applications or Apps. Your phone or tablet will list your installed apps in size order, with the biggest at the top, so you can decide what needs to go.





To view apps by size on your iPhone or iPad, go to Settings, tap General and select Usage. After a couple of seconds, a list of apps appears with the worst space hogs listed first, along with details of how much space they're using.

Uninstall apps you no longer use

It's very easy to get rid of unwanted apps from iOS. Simply press down on an app shortcut for several seconds (this is called a 'long press') until all the app icons start to wobble and an 'X' appears in the corner of each one. To delete an app, click its 'X'. You can also remove apps via the Settings, General, Usage screen mentioned in the previous step. Just tap an app in the list and delete it from there.



In Android, go to Settings, Storage and select Applications or Apps. Tap an unwanted app and choose Uninstall. Deleting an app will probably wipe any data associated with it, including items such as saved game data, so make sure you really have no further use for it before you go ahead.

Remove shortcuts from your screen

Your Android home screen can quickly become cluttered with app shortcuts, which not only makes it look untidy, but also means you may run out of space for new ones. To remove a shortcut, simply long-press it and drag it to the Remove bin or the cross that appears (depending on your version of Android). Note that this action only removes the app shortcut, not the app itself, so it won't free up any space. However, it will at least make your home screen look much tidier.



Get rid of pre-installed apps

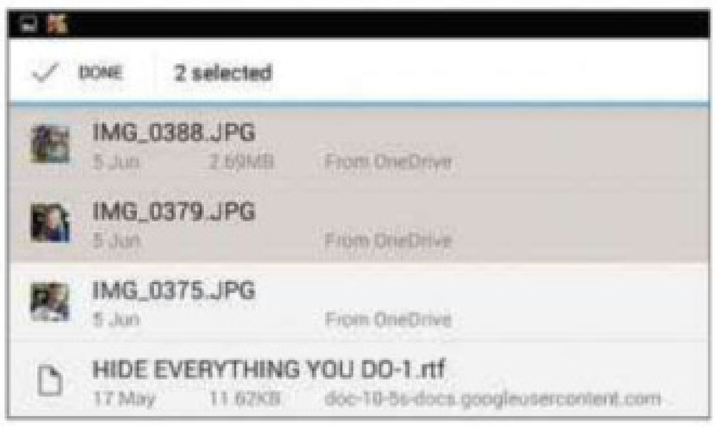
Nearly all phones come pre-installed with apps you may have no interest in and, annoyingly, many of them can't be easily removed. If you have an iPhone, these potentially unwanted apps include Newsstand, Stocks, Passbook and Game Center.

Apple doesn't allow you to simply delete these apps, although you can hide them in a folder or put them on their own page out of the way. Out of sight, out of mind is all well and good, but they will still be there, taking up space. If you truly want to delete them, you'll need to jailbreak your device, which carries some risk. You'll find instructions at evasi0n.com, but remember that jailbreaking invalidates your warranty and could even 'brick' your device (render it permanently unusable).



Android phones come cluttered with with even more pre-installed apps, which are added by Google, the device manufacturer (Samsung being a notable offender) and even your network provider. To get rid of those, you'll need to root your phone, which is similar to jailbreaking it. You can get help and advice on rooting from AndroidCentral (www.androidcentral.com/root), but the same provisos apply. You may also want a copy of Uninstall Master Uninstaller/ App Master (bit.ly/uninstallmaster349).

DELETE USELESS FILES



Clear your old downloads

Items you've downloaded and have no further use for, including Android apps in APK format, mail attachments, images, music tracks, PDF restaurant menus and ZIP files could all be taking up valuable space. To remove them from an Android device, open Settings, tap Storage and then Downloads. You can view Internet Downloads and Other Downloads, and sort the list by name, date modified and size. Select the downloads you don't want and tap the bin icon in the top-right corner.

To remove downloaded email attachments on an iPhone, open the Mail app and locate an email with a downloaded attachment. Use the Attachments view to make this easier. Swipe the message and select Archive. This will remove the email and attachment from the iPhone, but not from the mail server.

WHAT NOT TO DELETE

If you can remove something from an Android phone without rooting it, it's probably safe to do so, although you'll need to make sure you're not wiping any important personal data at the same time. If you've rooted the phone, you'll be able to delete a greater selection of apps and features, but doing so may not be safe (you should definitely avoid deleting anything with the word 'Google' in it). As a safeguard, it's worth backing up your device first using Titanium Backup (www.titaniumtrack.com), just in case you remove something important.



Uncover hidden files on your device

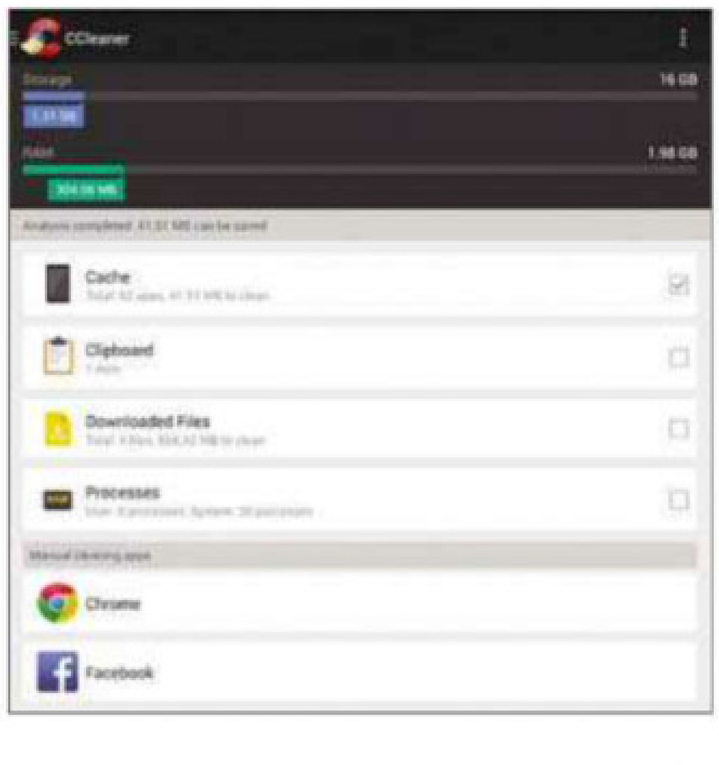
Hidden files are usually hidden for a reason – to stop you from deleting them and accidentally removing something important. That said, if you know what you're doing, it can be useful to get an idea of all the files that are present on your device. Rooting your phone will give you greater control, and you can use a file manager such as ES File Manager (bit.ly/esfile349) to organise and customise what you find. You'll have access to your entire file system and can show hidden files and even delete them, although you do so at your own risk.



Clear all your app caches

Just as the programs on your PC store data, which can build up over time and consume space, so Android apps also accumulate data that you're better off without. You can clear an app's cache or data by going to Settings, Applications or Apps. Select an app and tap the 'Clear cache' button to remove the temporary files (this will be greyed out if there's nothing to remove). There's also a 'Clear data' option that removes all files, settings, accounts, databases and more – rolling the app back to how it was when you first installed it. This is much more drastic, so you should only use this option if you're sure it's safe to do so.

Alternatively, you can save time by using the new CCleaner for Android (bit.ly/ccleanerandroid349) to clear the cache. We ran a Workshop about the app in our last issue (bit.ly/webuser348).



Clear call history from your phone

Although call-history data doesn't take up a great deal of space, it can compromise your privacy and you don't really need to keep it beyond the last few days.

Deleting calls from your iPhone's call history log is really easy. Open Phone and tap Recents to display all calls, or just those you've missed. Tap the Edit button, then tap the Clear link and choose to Clear All Recents. If you just want to delete individual calls, you can tap the red 'remove' button next to an entry on the Edit screen, or swipe left and select Delete.

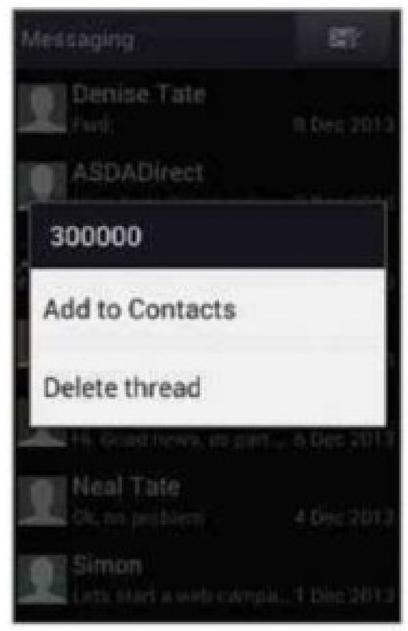


To remove a call from your Android history, go to Phone and select Logs. Long-press an entry and select Delete. To clear multiple calls from the list, open the menu and select Delete, then choose the calls to remove (or Select All) and tap Delete.

Some apps, including CCleaner for Android, will also clear your call history for you.

Wipe old messages from your phone

Clearing received messages is as easy as removing calls. In iOS, open the Messages app, swipe left and tap Delete next to a message, or open the Edit menu and tap the red delete button. In Android, open Messaging, then long-press on an individual text to delete it. Long-press a conversation and you'll be able to delete the entire thread. Again, you can save time by using CCleaner for Android or another clean-up app.



BLITZ SECURITY THREATS

Detect and remove mobile malware

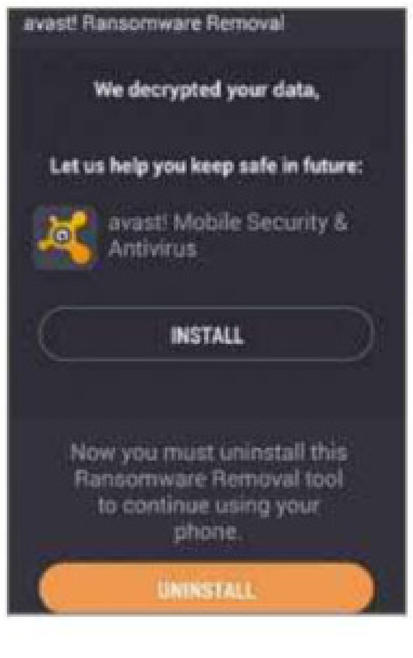
Mobile malware is a growing threat that shouldn't be ignored, but you're only likely to encounter it at the moment if you download infected apps from third-party stores. These apps do, very occasionally, appear on Google Play, but they are usually removed quickly. All the big security firms, including AVG, Avast, McAfee and Bitdefender offer apps for detecting and removing threats.

We'd definitely recommend installing Malwarebytes Anti-Malware for Android (bit.ly/malwarebytesandroid349), which scans your phone or tablet and its memory card for malware, Trojans and spyware, as well as highlighting unsafe security settings and detecting apps with dodgy permissions. You can either run the app manually or on a schedule.



Protect your phone against ransomware

Ransomware, such as Simplocker, is a particularly nasty strain of malware that encrypts files on an infected device, then demands money to unlock them. You can remove the infection easily enough, but this won't usually get your files back. Avast's Ransomware Removal app (bit.ly/avastransom349) scans your Android phone or tablet, and reports if it's been hijacked or not. If it has, the app will remove the malware and decrypt the files being held hostage for free. Once you've scanned your device, you'll need to uninstall the app to start using your phone again.



See our Mini Workshop (right) to find out how to use Avast Ransomware Removal.

Identify apps containing adware

Many free Android apps are ad-supported, which allows the developers to make money without charging a fee for the download. Lookout's Ad-Network Scanner & Detector (bit.ly/lookoutad349) tells you which of your installed apps serve up adverts and helps you better understand any potential privacy concerns. Many of the big ad networks collect information that identifies devices or users to deliver targeted ads. If you don't feel comfortable with this, then uninstall the offending app.



KEEP YOUR DEVICE TIDY

Install a mobile Recycle Bin

Most of us have experienced the sickening feeling that strikes when you accidentally delete something important. Adding a Recycle Bin to your Android device provides a safety net in case you erase some valuable photos or videos.

Dumpster (bit.ly/dumpster349) is an excellent free bin for Android phones and tablets – and you don't have to root your device to use it. It lets you 'undelete' almost every file type and will soon have the ability to restore deleted text messages, contacts and apps.

On iPhone and iPads, you can recover accidentally deleted

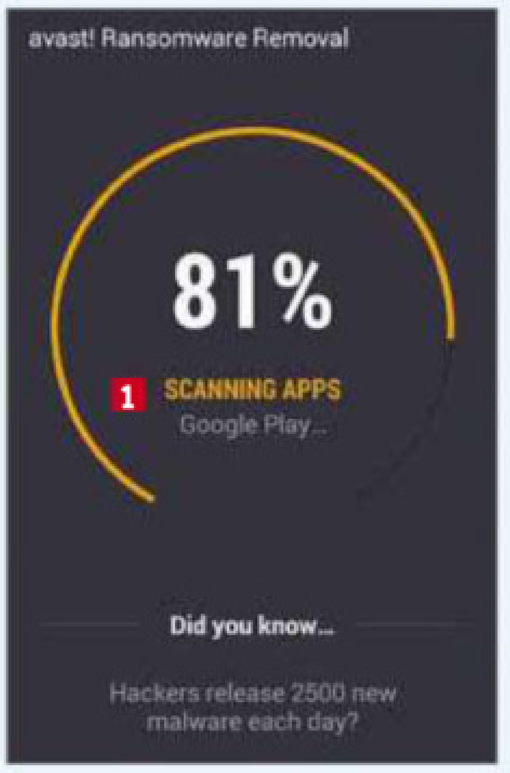


MINI WORKSHOP
Remove ramsomware from your phone

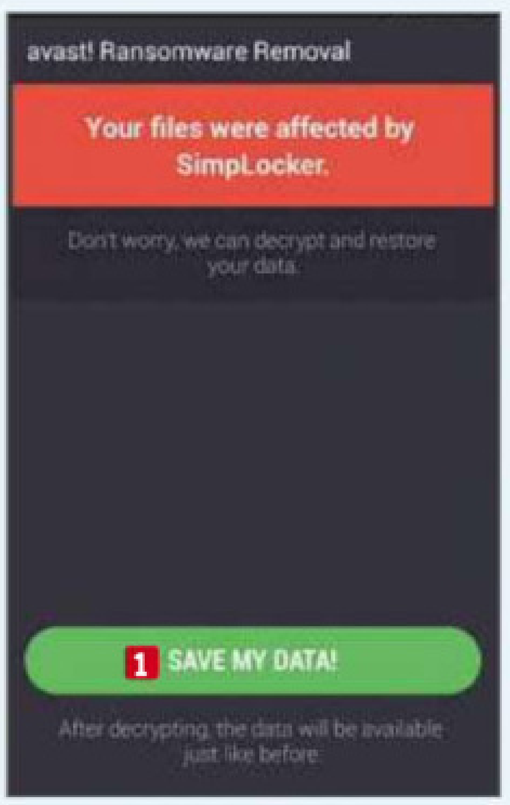


1 If your phone has been taken over by ransomware, you won't be able to install or run a removal tool on the device (the malware prevents this). But there is a way to beat this problem. Go to bit.ly/avastransom349 on your PC, click Install and on the page that opens, select your device 1 and click Install. 2

2 When the app arrives on your phone or tablet, it will appear in the notifications bar at the top of the device. Tap this, then tap the app name and Ransomware Removal will begin to scan your system, firstly for apps and then files. 1 You won't be able to do anything while it's working.



3 If your device is clear, you'll need to uninstall the app to be able to use your phone again. Tap the big orange Uninstall button. If it's infected, you'll see a message and can use the app to restore your data. 1 To avoid being infected with ransomware in the future, you'll need to install an anti-malware app.



MINI WORKSHOP
Remove junk files using AVG Cleaner

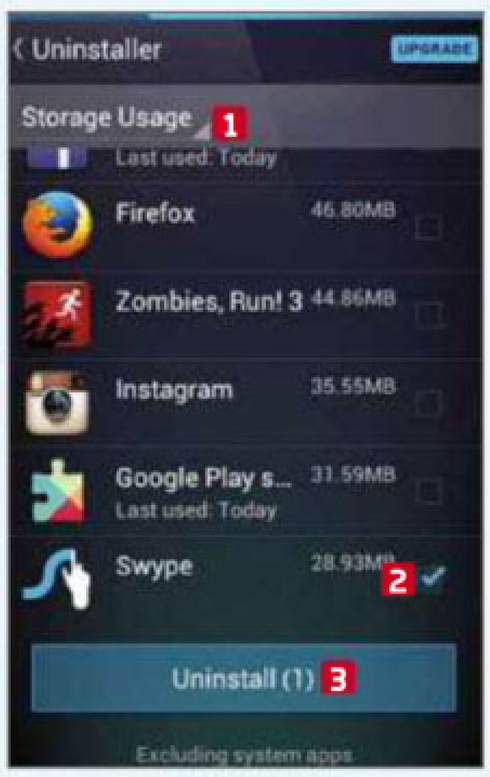
1 AVG's app automatically frees up storage and improves performance. The main screen offers options for clearing the cache 1 and history, 2 uninstalling apps 3 and optimising the battery life. 4 You get 30 days of Pro battery management features. The app will show you how much space can be saved. 5



2 Start by clearing the cache. Tap that option to view the list by size or name. 1 Select an app to view more information and to clear its cache. Alternatively, you can clean all the caches at once. 2 The History section is very similar and will let you clear browser history, downloads, the clipboard and Google Play details.



3 The App Uninstaller lets you remove unwanted apps. You can sort the list by storage usage, data usage, battery usage, frequency of use or name. 1 Tap an app to select it, 2 then tap Uninstall. 3 To improve battery life, go to that section and tap Optimise. Go into Settings to customise the auto-cleaning frequency.

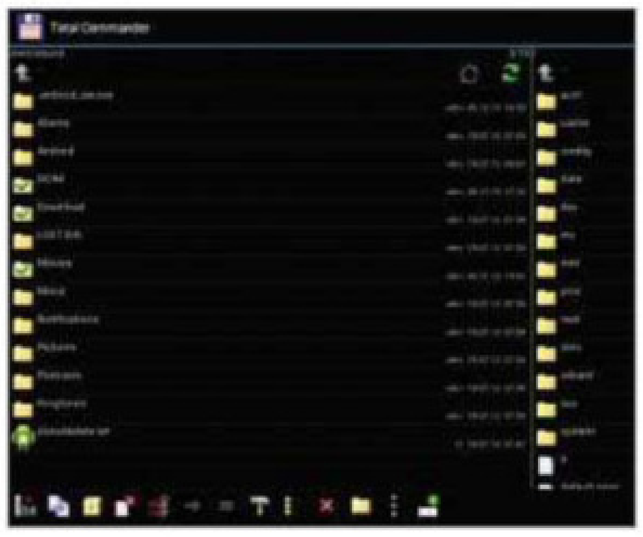


content using an app such as Leawo iOS Data Recovery (www.leawo.com). It's not free – in fact it's pretty expensive at $69.95 (£41) – but there is a trial available.

Use a file manager to keep organised

Android gives you access to its file system, which makes it easy to copy and move files between your devices and computers. Simply connect the two using a USB cable and you're good to go. If you install a file manager on your phone or tablet, you can also manage your storage on the go. There are lots of good choices available, but the previously mentioned ES File Manager is one of the best. It uses an Explorer-style window and lets you copy, paste, move and delete files. There's also a sidebar for accessing favourite folders and cloud-storage services such as Google Drive.

Alternatively, you could try the excellent Total Commander (bit.ly/totalcommander349), an Android version of the popular third-party Windows file manager, which makes it very easy to organise and delete every item on your device.



Schedule regular clean-ups

Rather than manually freeing up space, there are plenty of apps that handle the job for you automatically. AVG Cleaner (bit.ly/avgcleaner349) is one of our favourites and it can be set to run at a daily or weekly frequency, depending on how much you use your phone and the available memory and space. See our Mini Workshop on the left to find out how to use AVG.

Back up to the cloud and delete

There are lots of free cloud storage services you can use to back up the photos you take on your phone, as well as videos, music tracks and other files. iPhone users have iCloud, but that only offers 5GB of free space, which doesn't last long. There are iOS and Android apps available for OneDrive, Google Drive, Amazon Cloud Drive and Flickr, to name just four. The features available to you will depend on the app, but it's worth installing one that automatically backs up photos as you take them, so you never lose anything and you don't need to keep large image files stored on your device.



Save photos directly to a microSD card

You can avoid filling up the internal storage on your Android phone by setting it to automatically save the photos you take to your microSD card. To Launch the Camera app, go to Settings and select the SD card as your default storage, if this option is available.

FREE UP MORE SPACE

Delete junk files that use up space

The free Storage Analyser app (bit.ly/storageanalyser349) lets you see at a glance which apps, files and directories are taking up the most space on your Android device. It shows you the contents of both your internal and external storage, and lets you sort the list by size, name, date or count. Usefully, you can delete data directly through the app to get rid of space hogs immediately.



Remove big batches of unwanted photos

Your smartphone can quickly fill up with space-hogging photos, many



of which probably aren't worth keeping. To batch-remove multiple images from your iPhone, open the Photos app and tap the Photos tab at the bottom. Go to the Moments section, then tap Select in the top-right corner. Tap Select next to a set of photos to select them all, then tap on any images you want to keep. Finally, tap the bin to delete the unwanted pictures.

In Android, open the Gallery app, find the images you want to remove and long-press one until a green tick appears on it. Then go through and select the other images. You can also select 'all' to get rid of everything in one go. Click the Delete button at the bottom to remove the photos.

Remove songs you never listen to

Fed up of playing the same old tracks? You can remove them from your phone to free up space. On your iPhone, open the Music app, find a song you don't want any more and swipe your finger across it to the left. A red Remove button will appear. Tap it to delete the song.



On an Android device, simply long-press a track and select Delete from the menu.

Move big files to a memory card

You can expand the available storage on most Android phones with a microSD card. If you're pushed for space, you can insert a 32GB or 64GB card in your device and copy over photos, videos, music and even apps, freeing up space from the internal storage. To transfer apps, go to Settings and tap Storage, Apps. Select an app and, on the App Info screen, tap the 'Move to SD card' button. If you can't see this option or it's greyed out, it means you can't move that particular app to your memory card, so you're stuck with it on your phone.



To transfer photos and videos from a Samsung device to its memory card, you can use the supplied My Files app. Long-press a file or folder and choose where to move it to.

Erase everything from your device

If you're planning to sell, recycle or give away your phone, it's wise to go the whole hog and delete everything. You can do this by restoring it to its factory settings. On most Android devices, the process is as simple as going to Settings, choosing Backup & Reset, Privacy or Storage, and pressing 'Factory data reset'. You can erase everything from your phone or tablet's internal storage, including settings, apps and photos, and you can format your memory card to reset, too.



On an iPhone or iPad, go to Settings, General, Reset, 'Erase All Content and Settings'. Double-check that all the data has been deleted before you give your device to its new owner. ■

What you say...

We asked *Web User* readers how often they clean their phones and tablets. Here's what you told us

I don't clear the cache as often as I should. I use CM Security (bit.ly/cmios349) on my iPhone when I remember. I often have to sort through my apps and photos to clear space.

Emmy UpTo-NoGood

I never clean up my tablet. On my iPhone, I do quite a lot of recycling and reorganising of apps about once a month.

Ian Phipps

I use CCleaner for Android about once a month.

Paul Chapman

I have CCleaner on my Nexus and smart phone, and clean them up two or three times a week

David Gay

I didn't know CCleaner was available. I'll try it on my spare phone to see if it's as good as Clean Master (bit.ly/clean349), which I use on my phone and tablet. It starts when I wake the screen on my phone, so there's a daily clear, and a weekly one for bigger junk.

Richard Squires

I sometimes go through all my photos and delete the ones I've backed up online. Otherwise, I just leave my phone to look after itself.

Mark Patterson

NEXT ISSUE on sale Wednesday 30 July 2014

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You don't have to use expensive software to edit videos on your PC. **Andy Shaw** tests six online alternatives to see which ones make the cut

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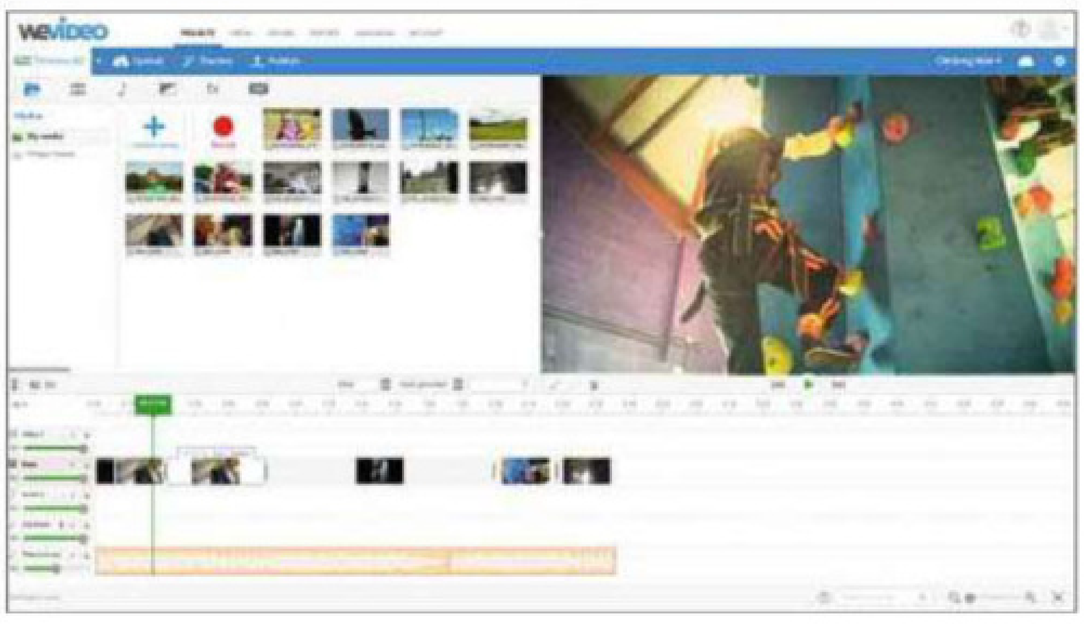
EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★☆

WebUser GOLD AWARD

What we liked:

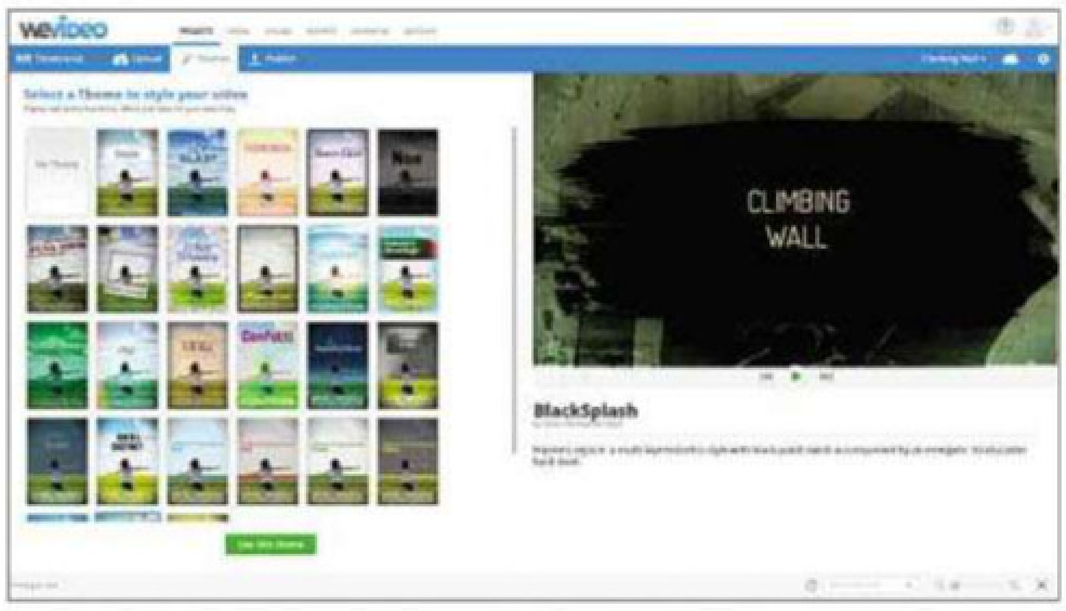
It's not often a web app works so well that you can barely distinguish it from the software it's intended to replace. WeVideo pulls this off by providing a stunning web-based video editor that rivals paid-for software.

You can upload clips to the service from your PC or via a selection of cloud-storage and video-streaming sites, including YouTube, Flickr, Google Drive and Dropbox. There are three levels of editing to choose from – a storyboard, a basic timeline and an advanced timeline. The storyboard is great for quickly splicing together clips, while the advanced timeline provides a wealth of tools and options. You also get automatic themes, which you can use to quickly drop in transitions and apply a range of filtered effects to make your videos look snazzy.



WeVideo lets you rotate clips, flip them horizontally or vertically, and zoom in on wrongly oriented clips to force them to fit the frame. We didn't even have to do this with our badly shot footage because the software automatically recognised the problem and corrected the orientation. It also let us import still photos into our video.

The most complicated aspect of WeVideo is working out what you get for free and what costs extra. With a free account, you can only publish 15 minutes of video per month; it has to stay on WeVideo's site (though you can link to it to share it with others); the maximum resolution is 480p; and you get 5GB of storage. The Premium account lets you publish 60 minutes of video per month; use 720p resolution; and export the video to your PC or direct to other sites (YouTube, Vimeo, Dropbox or Google Drive). You can also buy more uploads and increase the resolution with one-off payments. Thirty minutes at 720p costs $0.99 (around 58p) and 30 minutes at 1,080p is $1.99 (£1.16).



How it can be improved:

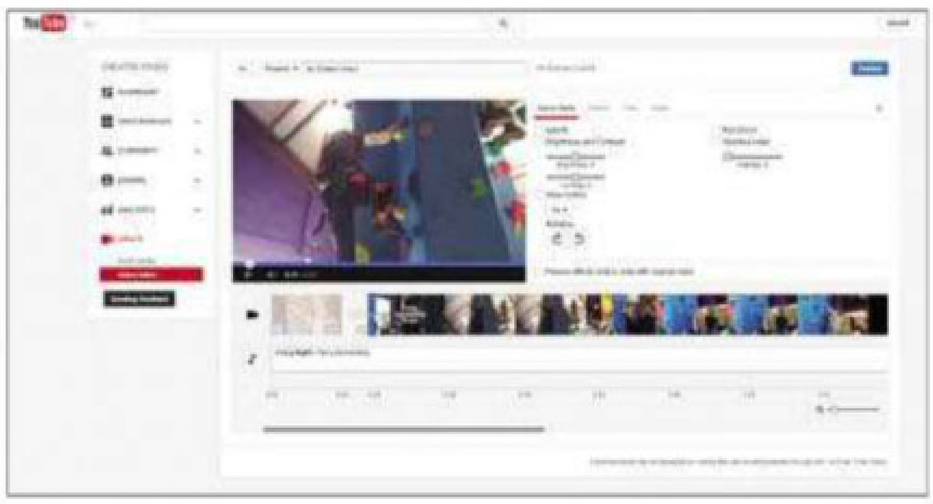
Depending on your internet connection, you might find WeVideo a bit slow when uploading your footage, particularly if it's high resolution. The software teases you about the extra features you get in the paid-for version, which might be enough to make you upgrade, but is otherwise annoying.

OUR VERDICT

This superb online video editor has everything you'd expect paid-for software to have, with levels of complexity to suit both quick edits and sophisticated productions. The free version includes essential editing tools, but limits what you can do with your video afterwards.

YouTube Editor | Free | www.youtube.com/editor

★★★★☆ | EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ FEATURES ★★★★☆
PERFORMANCE ★★★★☆ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★



What we liked:

If you've posted video clips online before, there's a fair chance you'll have put them on YouTube, where they're more likely to find their largest possible audience. If your video is going to end up on YouTube anyway, it makes sense to upload your raw footage directly to the site and edit it there.

You can use the Editor to trim clips and splice them together, and place transition effects in between. You can very easily drop in still images and text, and there's a good collection of music soundtracks to add an extra dimension to your productions.

There are also filters to change the way your video looks, a stabilisation tool to help with wobbly hand-held footage and a slow-motion tool.

How it can be improved:

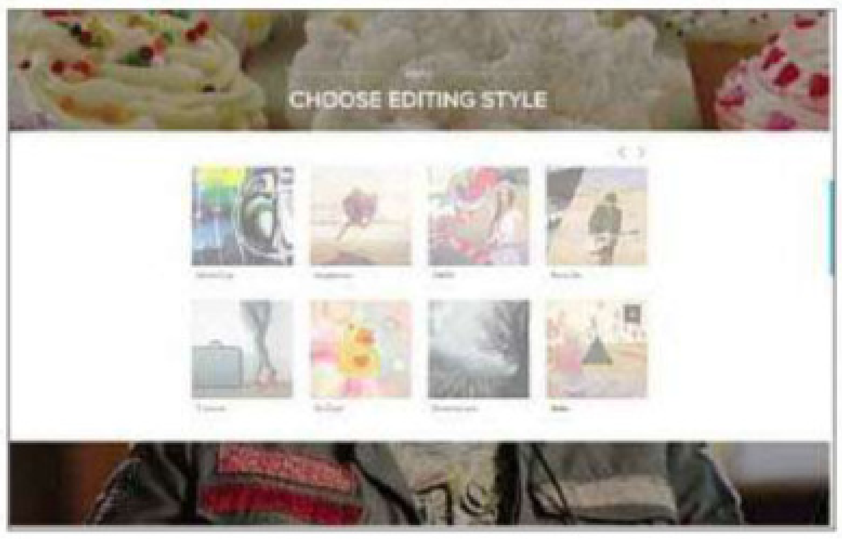
The interface is a bit clunky in places, which makes it difficult to precisely control where you perform edits using the drag-and-drop grabbers at the beginning and end of each video. It also lacks the accuracy of frame-by-frame editing.

OUR VERDICT

WeVideo's sophisticated interface trumps YouTube, but YouTube gives you everything for free. Its clunky controls make it harder to fine-tune a finished video, but it can make a surprisingly presentable job of your footage if you're willing to spend a little time and patience on it.

Magisto | From free | www.magisto.com | ★★★★☆

EASE OF USE ★★★★☆ FEATURES ★★★☆☆
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★☆☆



What we liked:

Editing videos takes time. It's relatively easy to trim and string together a collection of clips, but that's not going to win you any awards for creativity. If you want your video to look like it was edited by a professional, with effects and edits that fit with a cool soundtrack, Magisto can transform your wobbly footage into something spectacular. You can configure your settings while your videos are uploading, and you'll be emailed when your video is finished.

As with WeVideo, you have to pay to get the full service. The free option lets you upload ten clips or images per project, with a 500MB limit. The footage can be no longer than 15 minutes, and this can be turned into a finished video that's a maximum 90 seconds long and can only be hosted on the site. For more options, there's a monthly fee.

How it can be improved:

The limited video templates mean that your first few productions will look exceptional, but they may start to look samey if you're making lots of them.

OUR VERDICT

Magisto is easy to use and can turn a small collection of clips into a great-looking video, but you have little control over the outcome. It's better for showing off than creating video keepsakes to treasure.

BEST OF THE REST

ShotClip | Free

www.shotclip.com



ShotClip is superficially similar to WeVideo, in that it attempts to create an online version of your PC's video-editing software. However, it's not as slick. ShotClip didn't pick up on how our videos were oriented, so errors we made in shooting were impossible to correct. Instead, you'd need to first run the films through another conversion process to sort them out.

Loopster | From free

www.loopster.com



Loopster looks the part, but we found its timeline interface was frustrating to use. Dropping videos onto it caused the whole site to lock up while they were being processed and there was no option to reorientate badly shot footage.

The free version places a watermark on your finished videos. Upgrading removes this, increases the storage space to more than 5GB and lets you work in 720p.

VideoToolbox | Free

www.videotoolbox.com



VideoToolbox is completely free and has many of the features of the three award-winning video-editing sites.

However, instead of a snazzy drag-and-drop interface, it uses forms, grey buttons and drop-down menus. This makes some tasks tricky to carry out. If you want to split a clip, for example, there's no preview – you have to laboriously work out exactly where you want to make the edit in minutes and seconds.

Combine rival tools to make everything EASIER

Many companies make it difficult for you to use their services alongside others. **Edward Munn** shows you how to get the most out of your favourite tools by bringing them together

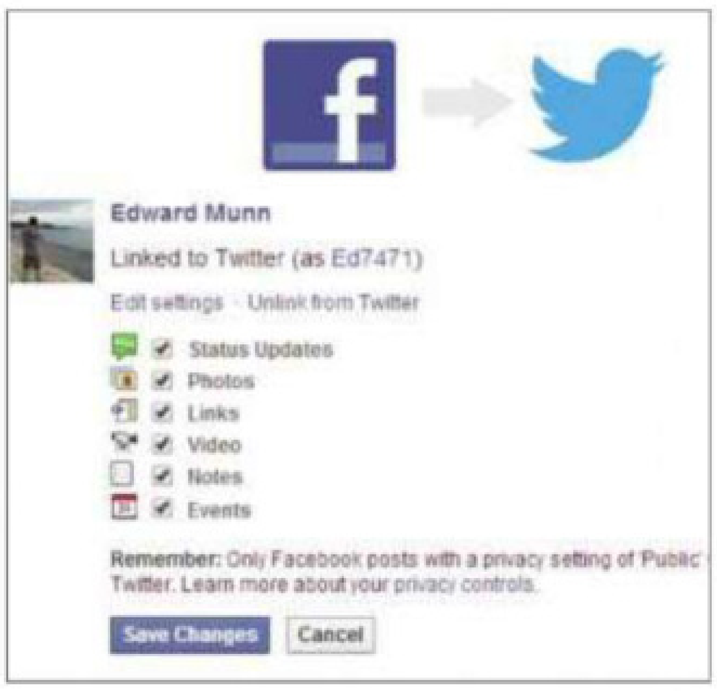


Post to Twitter and Facebook simultaneously

If you'd like all your tweets to appear on Facebook, it's very easy to pair your accounts. On Twitter, go to Settings and then Profile. Click the 'Connect to Facebook' button and you'll see a message about Twitter using some of your Facebook account information. If you're happy with that, click OK, and when you're told that 'Twitter would like to post to Facebook for you', click Okay. If successful, the page will read 'Your account is connected to Facebook'. Click 'Disconnect it' at any time to unpair your accounts, or simply untick 'post to my Facebook profile' if you want to temporarily disable the feature.



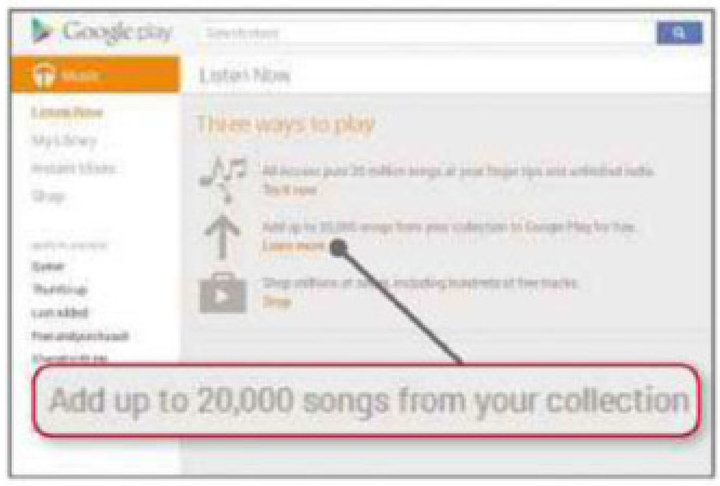
If you'd rather have your Facebook status updates posted to Twitter, go to Facebook.com/twitter and click 'Link my profile to Twitter', then 'Authorize app'. You can choose which type of updates are shared, so if you only want to share Status Updates, untick all the other boxes and click Save Changes. Only public Facebook statuses will appear on Twitter, so remember to choose this option when posting, or change your privacy settings for all future posts.



Use Spotify and Google Play Music with an iTunes library

By default, the Desktop version of Spotify imports any music files saved to your iTunes folder. However, you can also use it to wirelessly sync your iTunes library across all your devices. First, select the locally stored tracks in Spotify and try dragging them to the Songs section of Your Music. If Spotify has the tracks within its library, you will be able to stream them with any device or store them offline by simply accessing the Songs section of Your Music. If, however, your locally stored tracks do not appear, you'll need to transfer them to your device via your wireless network. To do so, add the relevant tracks to a Spotify playlist and, making sure both devices are connected to the same Wi-Fi network, select the playlist from your smartphone or tablet and press the Available Offline switch. Spotify will then copy the tracks to your device, showing a green arrow when the transfer is complete.

If you don't have a Spotify Premium account, you can still access your iTunes library on the go and for free using Google Play Music. Download and install Google Play Music Manager on your PC and it will invite you to upload up to 20,000 tracks from your iTunes library. Although this one-off process is a bit tedious, you can then use the Play Music app on any device to stream your music or store songs offline.





Back up Dropbox to Google Drive or OneDrive



You can easily create back-ups of your back-ups by nesting one cloud service within another. Since Dropbox limits you to a measly 2GB of free space, you might try nesting it within Google Drive, which offers new users a much more generous 15GB for free. Simply make sure that any important files are stored in Dropbox and you will then have a failsafe back-up of them in Google Drive, too.

To nest Dropbox within Drive, right-click the Dropbox icon in your System Tray, click the Settings icon, then click Preferences, then Account. Here, you can select Move and choose a new location for your Dropbox within the local Google Drive folder or another cloud service such as Microsoft's OneDrive. Remember that doing so will mean using double the bandwidth, because your PC will need to upload the file to both services each time you make any changes. Also, if you have both cloud services installed on a second PC, be sure to mimic the nesting behaviour of the first PC to avoid creating duplicates of all your Dropbox files.



Sync your Android and iOS calendars

If you own an iOS tablet and an Android smartphone (or an Android tablet and iOS phone), then you will probably want to sync your calendars across all your devices. Fortunately, adding Google Calendar to an iOS device is very straightforward. Go to Settings, tap 'Mail, Contacts, Calendars', then Add Account. Select Google, enter your account information, then make sure that Calendars is turned on. From the calendar app on your iOS device, tap Calendars to choose which accounts are displayed at any given time. Should you want to move entries from one account to another, you can do so by tapping the entry, selecting Calendar and then choosing the appropriate destination.



Viewing your iCloud calendar from an Android device is not quite so simple, but there are free apps including Sunrise Calendar (bit.ly/sunrise349) that are compatible with the service. From Sunrise, tap the settings icon, then Add Account and iCloud Calendar.

Read all your webmail in Gmail

Having to check multiple webmail accounts can be tedious and time consuming. Thankfully, Google's free Mail Fetcher service (bit.ly/fetch349) lets you read and reply to emails from up to five other webmail services, as long as they offer POP3 access.

To set up Mail Fetcher in Gmail, go to Settings, select 'Accounts and Import'



and click 'Add a POP3 mail account you own'. After you've followed the instructions on screen, Gmail downloads all your old messages and will in future import any new ones. If you want to easily identify emails sent to another address, be sure to tick the 'Label incoming messages' option.



USE IFTTT

IFTTT, which stands for 'If this, then that', combines different services to automate everyday tasks, so you don't have to. Featured in Issue 326 of *Web User* (bit.ly/webuser326), it lets you create your own 'recipe' – a cause-and-effect formula where if a particular statement is true, an automated action is triggered. For example, if you want to receive an email if the weather forecast for tomorrow predicts rain, or transfer to Dropbox copies of all the photos you're tagged in on Facebook, IFTTT can take care of it.

You may even find that it can carry out some of the tasks we've covered in this feature, such as syncing your cloud services or posting Facebook status updates to Twitter. IFTTT has the potential to act as a hub from which you manage much of your digital life, and if you're struggling for inspiration or overwhelmed by the creative possibilities it provides, you can browse recipes created and shared by others.

IFTTT



Discuss these tips at forum.webuser.co.uk

BEST SITES ABOUT THE First World War



One hundred years ago, the world was about to be devastated by a lengthy and bloody war. **David Crookes** looks at the best online content commemorating The Great War

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the start of World War One, a turbulent and bloody period of history during which more than nine million people were killed. For four years, from 28 July 1914 until 11 November 1918, battles raged, predominantly in Europe, sparked by the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and fuelled by a drive for territorial and ideological expansion.

World War One is a huge subject, but there's a wealth of online content that can educate and enlighten us about its causes and consequences. Whether you want to browse archive documents, watch footage from the trenches or listen to podcasts of historians discussing the war, the web offers an extensive set of resources. In this feature, we highlight the sites most worth visiting.

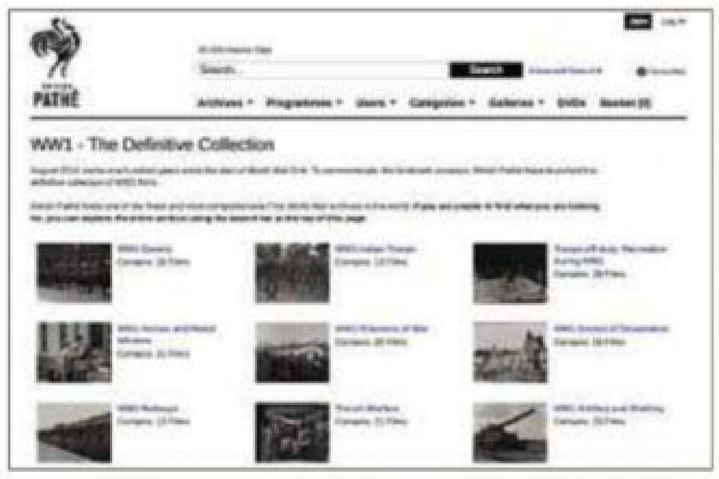
View animated maps of key moments in the war

If you find the complexities of World War One difficult to get to grips with, the BBC's animated maps (bit.ly/bbcanimations349) breaks down key events into more manageable chunks. The maps offer readable explanations in clear English, accompanied by playable visuals that help to explain, for example, the war on the Western Front and the Battle of the Somme. With helpful arrows that show the movement of troops, the maps bring the war to life while never forgetting the sacrifices made by those involved.



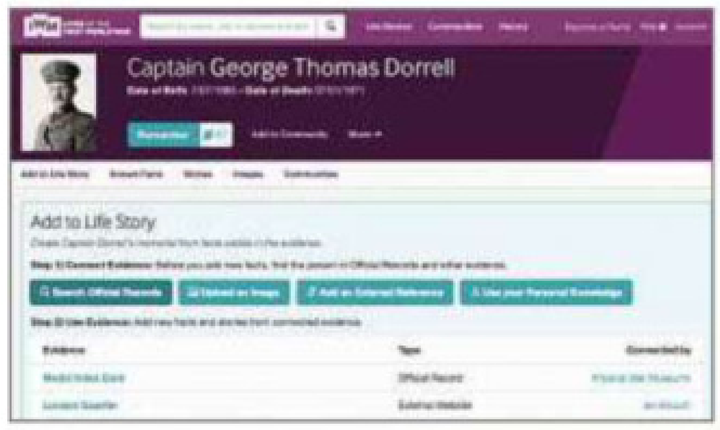
Watch archive war films at British Pathé

British Pathé (bit.ly/pathe349) was producing bi-weekly newsreels by 1910, so it was ideally placed to capture the horrors of the Great War four years later. Hundreds of fascinating short films, from 1914 to 1918, are available to watch on the British Pathé website, grouped into categories such as Trench Warfare, 'Scenes of Devastation' and Gas Attacks. Most of the videos are silent, but each one is accompanied by a thorough description and a series of still photos. Some of the footage, such as a film featuring soldiers being treated for shellshock, is fascinating and harrowing in equal measure.



Discover the stories of combatants

Eight million people from across Britain and the Commonwealth were involved in the war effort and all had stories to tell. Lives of the First World War (livesofthefirstworldwar.org) is a project from the Imperial War Museum which aims to document those stories to create a permanent digital memorial. The site has entries for every person recorded in official documents, but it needs help in building up each profile. By registering with the site, you'll be able to search for a relative or someone you know well, and mark their life by looking through the official records and adding images, external references and personal knowledge.



Explore archive records from the war

The National Archives (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war) holds many thousands of records from 1914 to 1918. These include the service records of Household Cavalry soldiers; letters and maps; and unit war diaries – records of operations that were kept to prepare the official history of the war and help the army improve in the future. More than 1.5 million pages have been digitised and are being released in stages. It's a bulging online collection that would take months to browse in its entirety, making it a must for professional and amateur historians.



View photographs from World War One

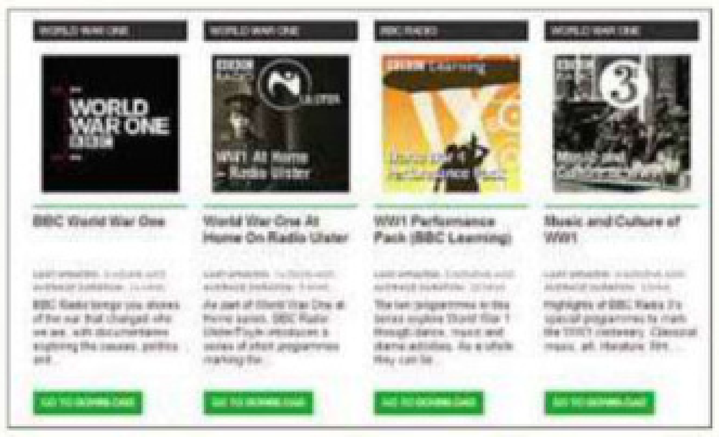
FirstWorldWar.com (www.firstworldwar.com/photos) hosts a wide range of photo galleries, grouped into categories including Battlegrounds, Camp Life & Training, Home Front, Machine Guns and

Refugees, which play as a slideshow once you open an image. The site also includes propaganda posters from around the world. Incidentally, if you run a blog and would like royalty-free images of World War One, you can select from hundreds at Getty Images for no cost (www.gettyimages.co.uk/embed).



Listen to podcasts about the Great War

The BBC's brilliant World War One podcasts (www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/ww1) tell the stories that changed the course of the war, while exploring the influence of the conflict on music, art, literature and other cultural media. The downloads last from three to 22 minutes and are between 6MB and 10MB in size.



Read World War One news and analysis

Most news outlets are marking the centenary by offering coverage of the historic conflict in their own style. ITV's First World War blog-like site (bit.ly/itvwar349) presents short, frivolous stories backed up with tweets and images. For more weighty coverage, *The Guardian* applies a 21st-century viewpoint to many of its reports (bit.ly/guardian349), while *The Independent* has summarised World War One in 100 vivid and fascinating moments (bit.ly/independent349).



Read articles by leading experts

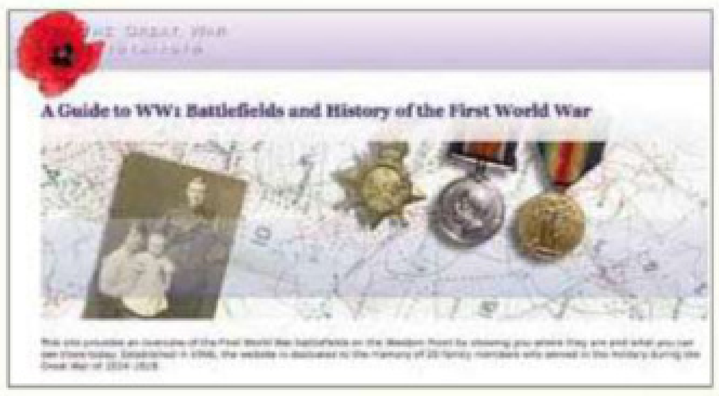
More than 50 articles about World War One have been collated on the British Library's website (www.bl.uk/world-war-one). Among them is a debate on the origins of the war by Dr Annika Mombauer, and a look at how soldiers coped psychologically with combat, by Dr Matthew Shaw. Articles are grouped under themes ranging from Civilians and Propaganda to 'The war machine', and 'Race, empire and colonial troops', and each has copyright information that tells you whether you can reproduce the words and images on your website. There are also 490 Collection items, including photos, posters and drawings.



Explore the battlefields of WWI

If you want to visit the battlefields of World War One, view historically significant locations or explore the scarred landscape of Flanders and north-eastern France, Great War (www.greatwar.co.uk) provides maps, photos and lots of information. It's a bit disorganised, with links scattered all over the place, but you can view events, church records, trench maps and the best guidebooks to buy.

To book guided tours of battlefields, go to Visit Battlefields (www.visitbattlefields.co.uk) and Shearings (www.shearings.com/battlefields). You can find out about events around the UK commemorating the centenery at 1914.org (www.1914.org).



Find out how WWI affected your area

The BBC's superb World War One At Home site (bit.ly/athome349) lets you enter a town, county or postcode to discover the war stories that affected your neighbourhood. Areas of interest are clearly marked and explained, with each linking to BBC articles and a short explanatory video or audio



documentary. The stories are a mix of poignant and light-hearted tales – one happily describes that the only fatality in one bombed village was a song thrush!

Watch TV war documentaries

The History Channel's website (www.history.com/topics/world-war-i) provides a reliable historical resource, explaining events in a clear and concise manner. Its video documentaries explore subjects such as WWI Firsts, 'Did WWI lead to WWII?' and 'The US in World War One'. For longer TV and radio programmes, the BBC's guide is a good place to start (bit.ly/bbcdocs349), and you can catch many recent documentaries on iPlayer.



Educate yourself about WWI for free

It may seem obvious but you can do far worse than visit Wikipedia (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) which is, on the whole, accurate and rich in material about World War One, with many useful jumping points and references for further reading. OpenLearn from the Open University (bit.ly/openlearn349) also offers an academic in-depth look at the origins of the war.



Broadband Deals

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	Provider	Package name	Monthly price	Contract length	Broadband speed	Allowance	First-year cost*
1	EE	EE: Broadband & Calls	£9.95 (£2.50 for 12 months)	12 months	17Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	CHEAPEST £30.00
2	TalkTalk	TalkTalk: Broadband	£3.50 (HALF PRICE for 6 months)	12 months	16Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£31.50
3	Primus saver	Primus: Broadband & Calls	£4.00 (HALF PRICE for 6 months)	18 months	15Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£36.00
4	plusnet	Plusnet: Broadband & Calls	£9.99 (£3.49 for 12 months)	12 months	16Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£41.88
5	sky	Sky: Broadband & Calls	£10.00 (HALF PRICE for 12 months)	18 months	16Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£60.00
6	TalkTalk	TalkTalk: TV, Broadband & Calls	£8.50 (HALF PRICE for 6 months)	18 months	16Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£76.50
7	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£15.50 (£7.50 for 6 months)	18 months	50Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	£138.00
8	plusnet	Plusnet: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£19.99 (HALF PRICE for 6 months)	18 months	76Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£179.88
9	sky	Sky: Fibre Broadband & Calls	£20.00 (HALF PRICE for 6 months)	18 months	38Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited	£180.00
10	Virgin media	Virgin: Broadband & Calls	£28.00 (£20 for 6 months)	18 months	152Mbps max speed	∞ unlimited **	FASTEST £288.00

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*First-year cost does not include line rental. Cost is calculated at monthly price x12 with all introductory offers subtracted. Additional charges incurred outside of free inclusive calls not included in first-year cost.

** Fair-usage or restriction policy applies.

Data supplied by www.broadbandgenie.co.uk. Correct as of 7 July 2014

Ofcom

Broadband Genie's helpline is powered by Simplify Digital, the Ofcom-accredited switching service

Take a Screen Break

Give your eyes a rest from your PC, phone or tablet, and try our fiendish fortnightly challenge. This issue we're asking: how well do you know **Android**?

1 What was the name of the first Android phone, which was launched in October 2008?

2 Which operating-system kernel is Android based on?

3 What's the name of the San Francisco company that developed Android?

4 And in what year did Google purchase that company to make Android part of its empire?

5 Which widely used video format isn't supported by Android, which means you can't play files in that format on your phone or tablet?

6 Who famously threatened to go "thermonuclear war" to destroy Android, according to his biographer?

7 Which programming language is Android based on: C++, Java or Basic?

8 What's the name of the popular Android tablet that Tesco launched in September 2013?

9 What was the first Android app to pass a billion downloads on Google Play, earlier this year?



10 Which sweet treat was Android 2.3 named after?

11 True or false: Android 3 (also known as Honeycomb) was never available on smartphones?

12 What was the first device to run Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean)?

13 What's Android's current share of the smartphone market worldwide: 63 per cent, 78 per cent or 85 per cent?

14 What's the name of the first Android games console, which was funded through Kickstarter?

15 What name do Google developers reportedly call the green Android logo?

CAN YOU GUESS THE ANDROID APPS FROM THE PICTURES BELOW?

A



B



C



D



E

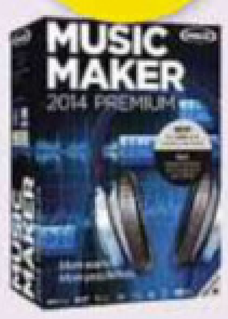


Get the answers online at www.webuser.co.uk/quiz349

COMPETITIONS

WORTH £89.99 EACH

WIN 1 OF 5
MAGIX Music Maker 2014 Premium



MAGIX Music Maker 2014 Premium lets you easily combine loops, add studio effects and record your own vocals and instruments. It contains over 5,000 new loops and sounds, with an extra 1,000 available as a free download. The new Auto Mastering function makes tracks sound better than ever, while Vocal Tune makes it easy to correct imperfections in your vocal recordings. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'musicmaker' in the subject line. For more info visit www.magix.cm/gb.

WORTH £244.81 EACH

WIN!
Acer C720P Chromebook



Winner of our Chromebook Group Test in Issue 347, the C720P has a unique feature that was previously only available on the £1,000 Chromebook Pixel - a touchscreen. It's a high-performance computer built for speed, simplicity and security. It boots up in seconds, updates itself automatically, and comes with all the Google apps you want. It runs Chrome OS and has a battery life of 7.5 hours. To enter, email your address to webusercomp@dennis.co.uk with 'chromebook' in the subject line. For more information visit www.acer.co.uk.

Practical WebUser

17 pages of workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

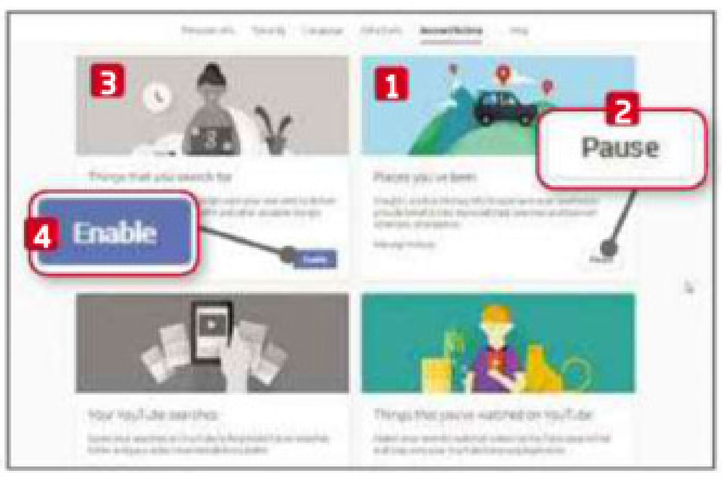
Take control of Google's Account History

www.google.com/settings/accounthistory

Account History brings together all Google's history tools for location, search and YouTube. Here's how to manage what the search giant stores and knows about you

Your browser records information about your movements on the web and stores it in its history. Google does something very similar, logging your searches, location details and YouTube activity. You can view all the information held by Google by going to the new Account History page. More importantly, you can also remove some or all of the stored records if you don't want anyone knowing about a search you performed, a video you watched, or a place you visited.

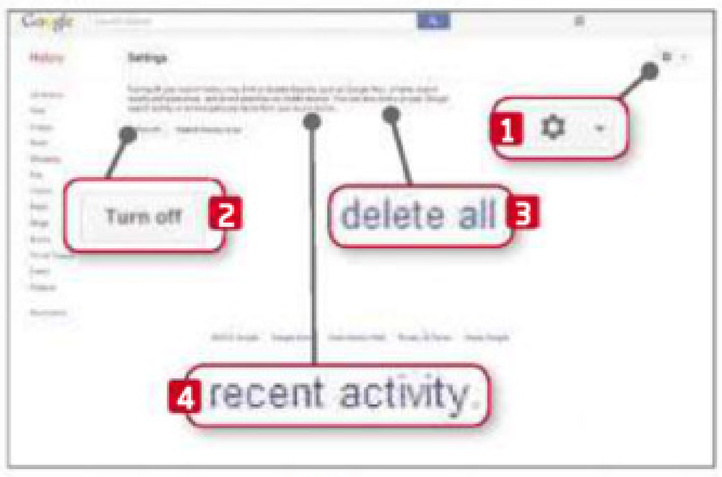
This recorded history can help inform tools such as Google Now, so be careful when selecting the information you clear if you still want Google to predict your movements and habits.



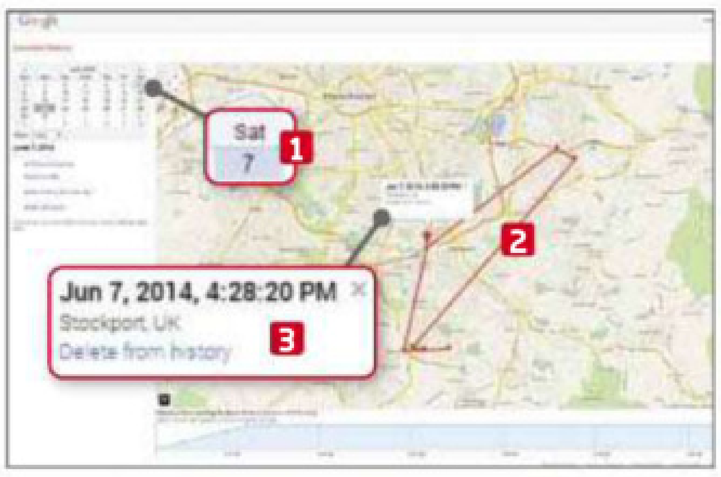
1 The Account History page has four sections covering Google searches, locations, and YouTube searches and watched videos. Colour graphics 1 indicate that Google is recording your history. You can pause the data-gathering process. 2 Sections in black and white 3 aren't active, but can be enabled. 4



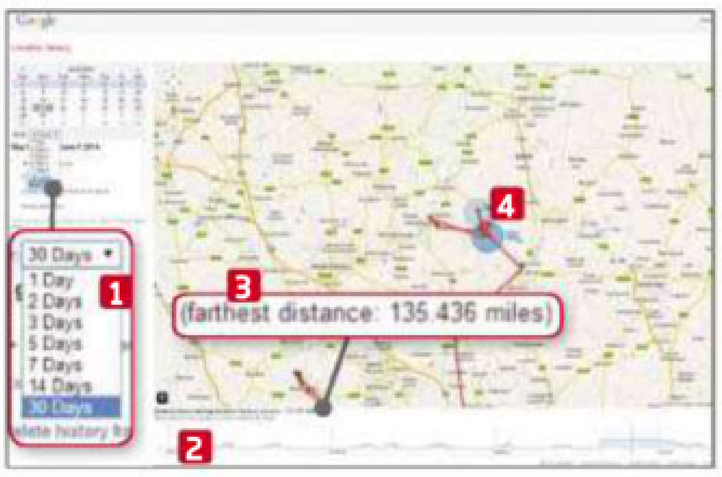
2 To view past searches, click the 'Manage history' link for that section. You may be prompted to re-enter your account password. You can see what you've searched for recently and when, 1 and filter your searches. 2 To remove records from your search history, select them 3 and click 'Remove items'. 4



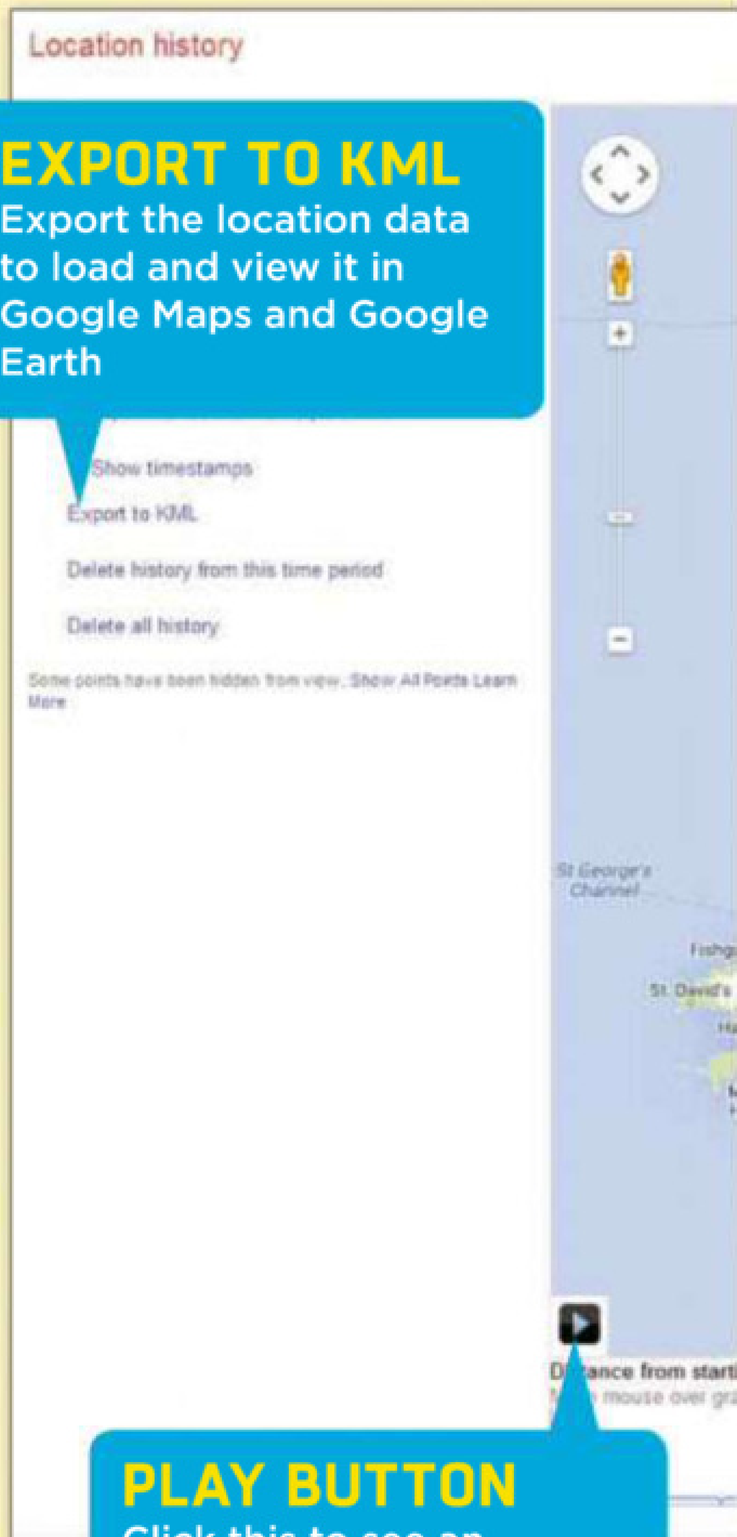
3 Click the cog 1 and go to Settings. You can turn off search history 2 but doing so may affect the quality of your search results, and features such as Google Now may become less useful. You can delete all past Google search activity 3 or go back to the preview page 4 and remove specific items.



4 Google records places you've visited. Click the 'Manage history' link for that section to see your location history. Select a date 1 to see where you were displayed on the map. 2 Click a pin to see a date, time and additional information 3 (for example, if you were moving or stationary).



5 Use the drop-down menu to select a duration 1 from one day to up to 30 days. Pick a timescale of three days or more to see a graph of your travels along the bottom of the map. 2 The furthest distance will be displayed. 3 Move your mouse over any point in the graph to see the location on the map. 4



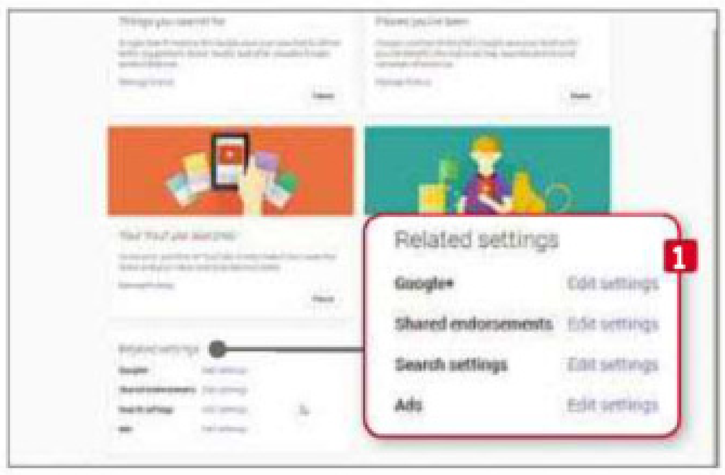




6 To view your YouTube searches, click that section's 'Manage history' link. A list of search queries is displayed. 1 Click a link to see the results. You can clear individual items or all search history, 2 and pause/resume search recording. 3 Use the sidebar on the left to view other activities, such as Uploads and Likes. 4



7 The 'Things you've watched on YouTube' section is self-explanatory, and displays your viewing history. 1 So if you saw a video you'd like to watch again, but can't remember what it was called, you'll be able to track it down here. You can add videos to the Watch Later section, 2 or create a new channel.



8 At the bottom of the Account History page is the 'Related settings' section. 1 From here, you can edit settings for Google+, Shared Endorsements (if you like something, Google may share this info with your friends), Search Settings, and Ads (the info Google uses to show ads it thinks will appeal to you).

Workshop 2

Check that links are safe before you click them

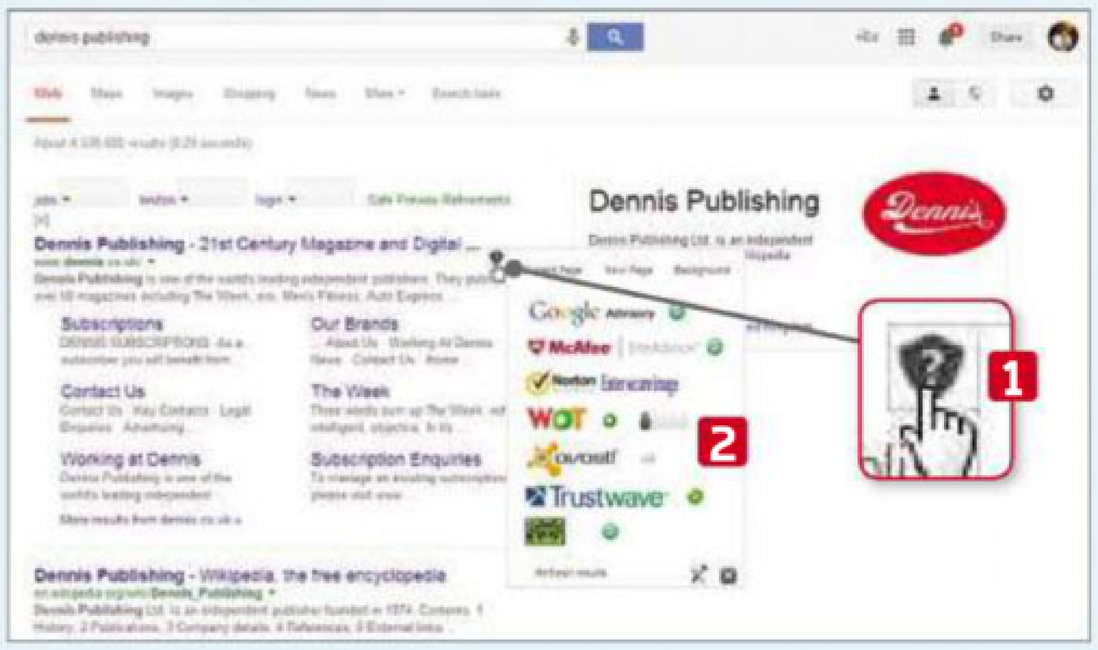
Safe Preview: bit.ly/safepreview349 | 15 mins | Google Chrome, Firefox

There are several browser add-ons that warn you whether or not a website is safe before you click to enter it. But why rely on the opinion of just one security program or web-reputation service?

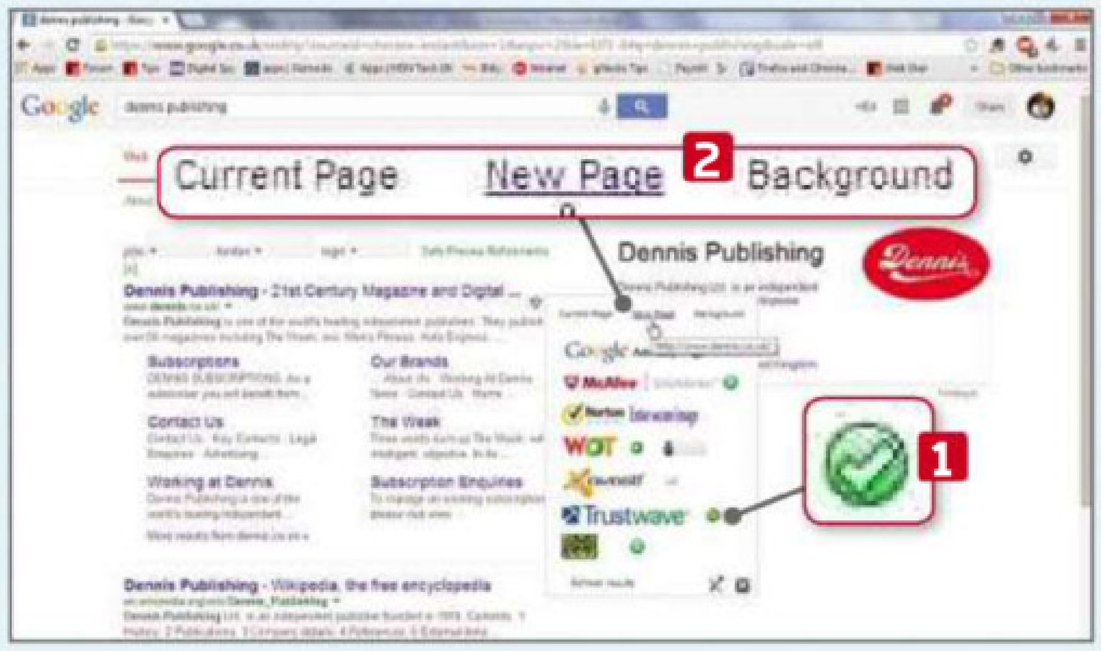
Safe Preview brings together up-to-date information from seven leading web-safety services, including Google, McAfee Site Advisor and Web of Trust.

Safe Preview is available for both Chrome and Firefox, but to show you how to get to grips with its settings, we've used Chrome in this workshop. The add-on lets you decide which services to use and you can also preview pages before loading them in your current window.

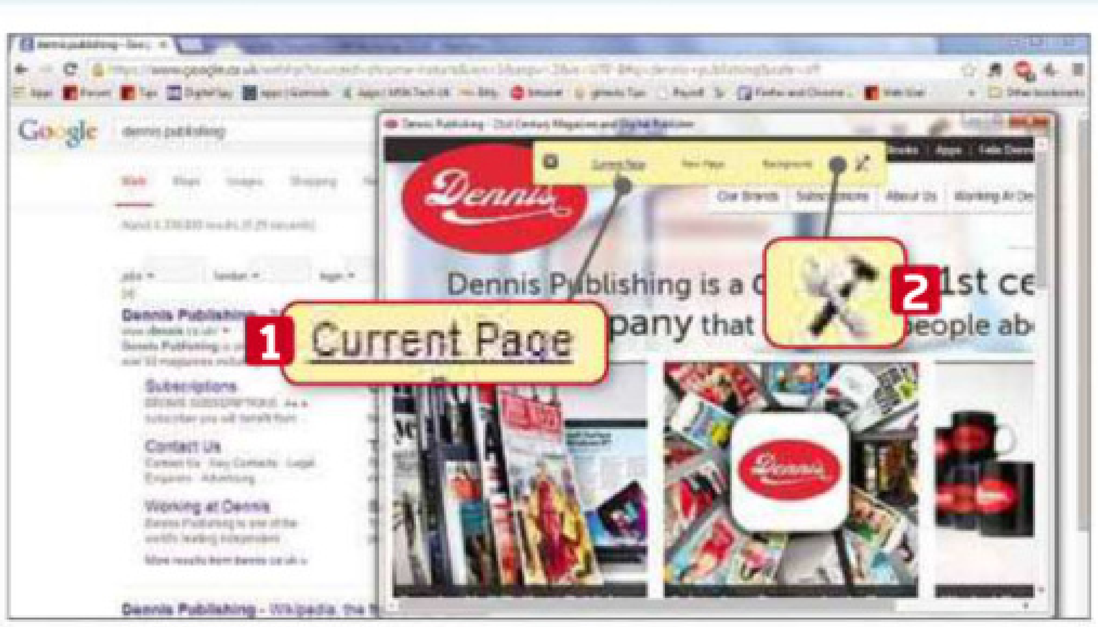




1 Visit bit.ly/safepreview349, click Free and Add to install Safe Preview. Enter a search term into the address bar or search box and hover your cursor over a link to see two icons. Click the 'Is it Safe?' shield icon [1] to find out a site's safety rating by a variety of web-reputation services. [2]



2 Most anti-virus sites display a tick if the site is considered safe, [1] which you can then click to find out more about the trustworthiness of that domain. If you're happy with the site's clean status, click Current Page, New Page or Background, [2] depending on how you want to open it.



3 When you hover your cursor over a domain, you'll see a magnifying-glass icon. This lets you preview the page in a regular or incognito tab. Click Regular, and if you're happy to load the page in your current tab, click Current Page. [1] Click the hammer-and-spanner icon to alter the settings. [2]



4 By default, the icons appear next to a hyperlink, but you can click the Display Icons drop-down menu [1] and select Near Cursor [2] to get even quicker access to them.

Check links are safe before you click



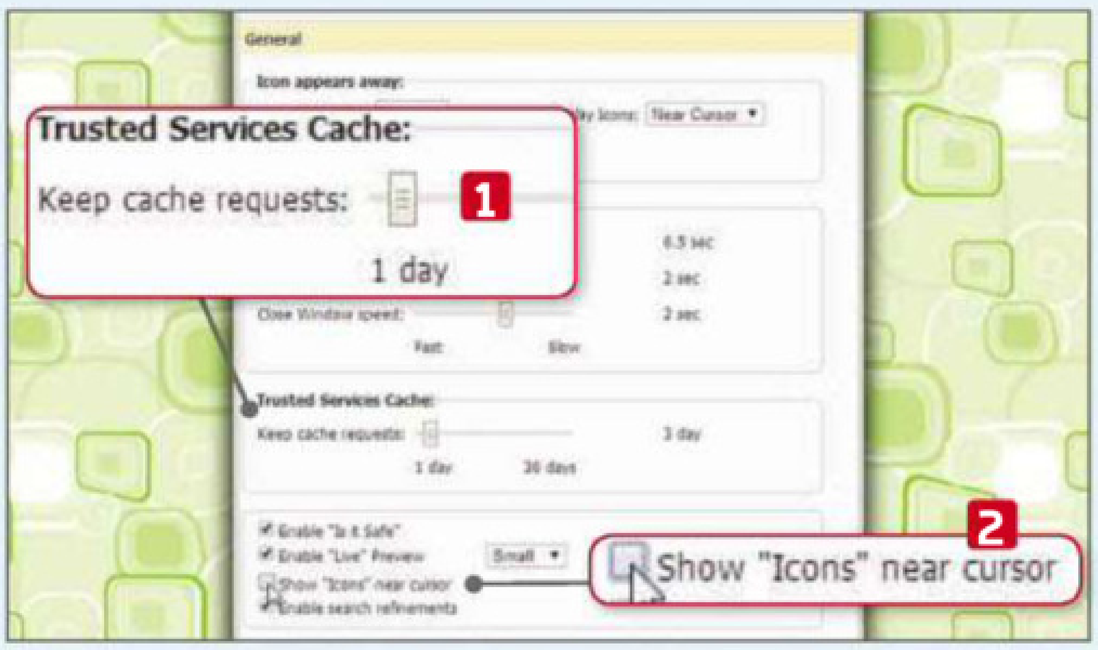
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

Safe Preview has a feature, enabled by default, that refines your searches in Google or Bing. Search for 'Apple' in Google, for example, and the extension suggests the searches 'Apple store' and 'Apple UK'. Some may find this feature irritating because it is powered by FVDSearch and not Google. To disable it, untick the appropriate box at the bottom of the General settings page.



5 Use the Time Delay section to choose how long it takes for the icons to appear and disappear when you move your cursor to or away from a link. 1 The 'Is it Safe?' dialogue box will disappear within two seconds of you removing your cursor, but you can make this faster or slower. 2



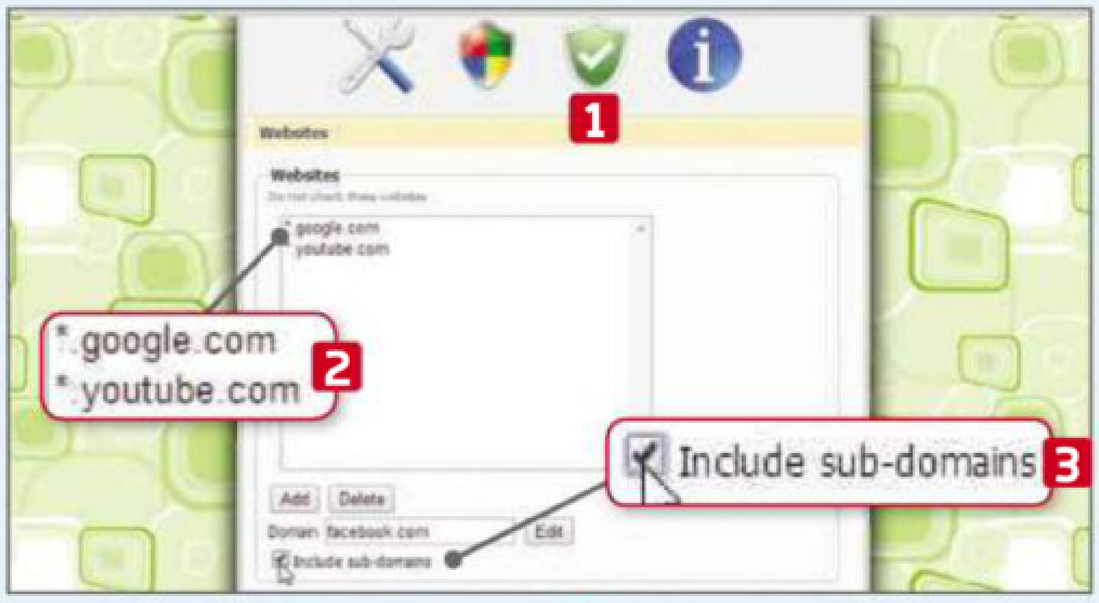
6 From the General settings page, you can set the number of days for which Safe Preview keeps a cache of trusted sites. 1 If you are distracted by the extension's icons, untick 'Show "Icons" near cursor', 2 then simply right-click a link to use Safe Preview's features.



7 If you only want to use the 'Is it Safe?' feature, you can untick 'Enable "Live" Preview' 1 to remove this option from the right-click menu. The drop-down menu showing the word Small 2 lets you alter the size of the live preview window, should you decide to keep it.



8 Select the multi-coloured shield icon 1 to access Safe Preview's service settings and customise which services the extension uses. Since Avast and WOT do not use a green tick to indicate a safe site, we disabled these services as well as Norton's, 2 which didn't display its green tick properly.



9 Click the green shield icon 1 to visit the trusted websites page. Enter the domains of any websites you use regularly 2 to stop Safe Preview from checking them. Tick 'Include sub-domains' 3 before clicking Add if you want the extension to ignore all sub-domains of the website.



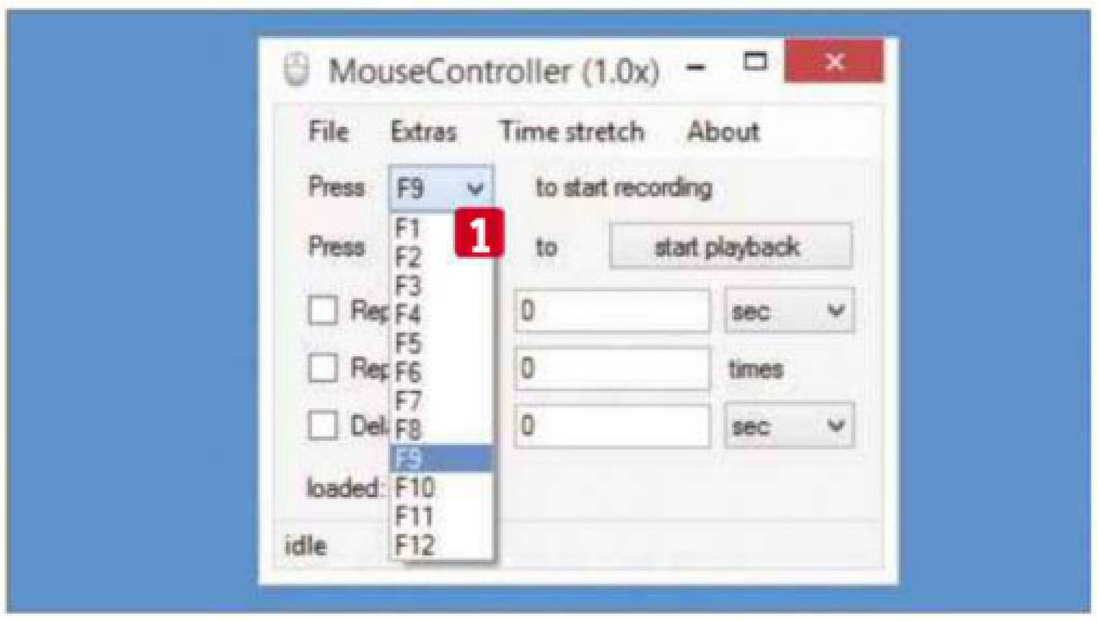
10 After making changes to SafePreview settings, make sure you click Apply Changes. 1 Should you wish to report any bugs or make any suggestions to the developers, the About page includes a contact email address 2 and website. 3

Automate anything by recording mouse clicks

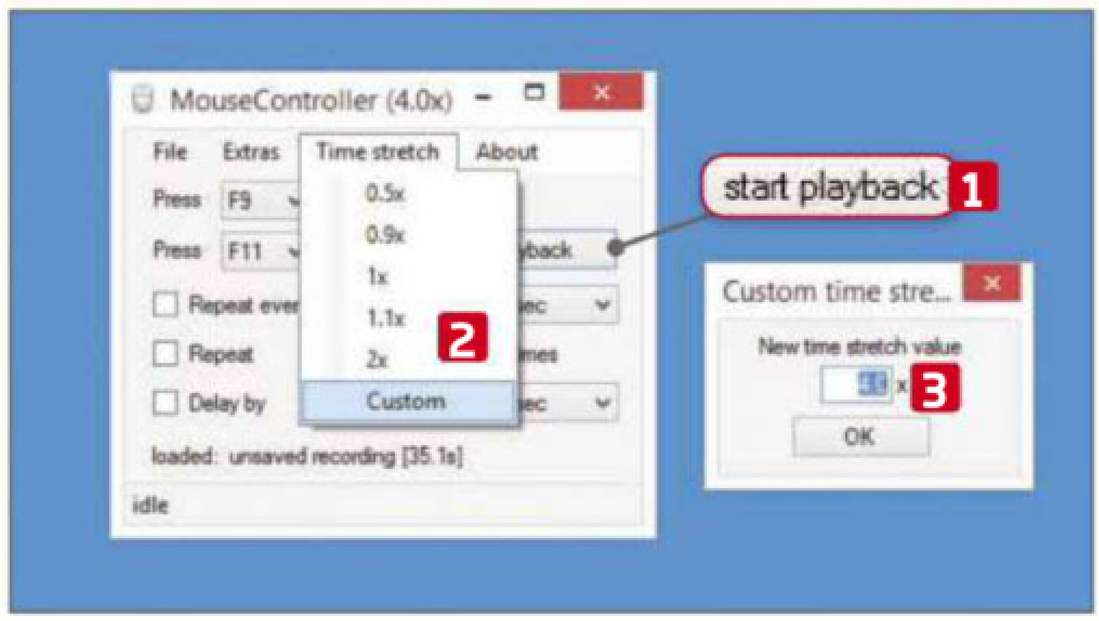


Many of the things you do on a PC are repetitive, such as opening the same programs and files every day, or performing the same editing tasks over and over again. If you use a mouse to carry out these jobs, you can use MouseController to copy the movements and reproduce them. The software is small, portable and comes as a zipped executable file, so you simply unpack it to the folder you want to keep it in.

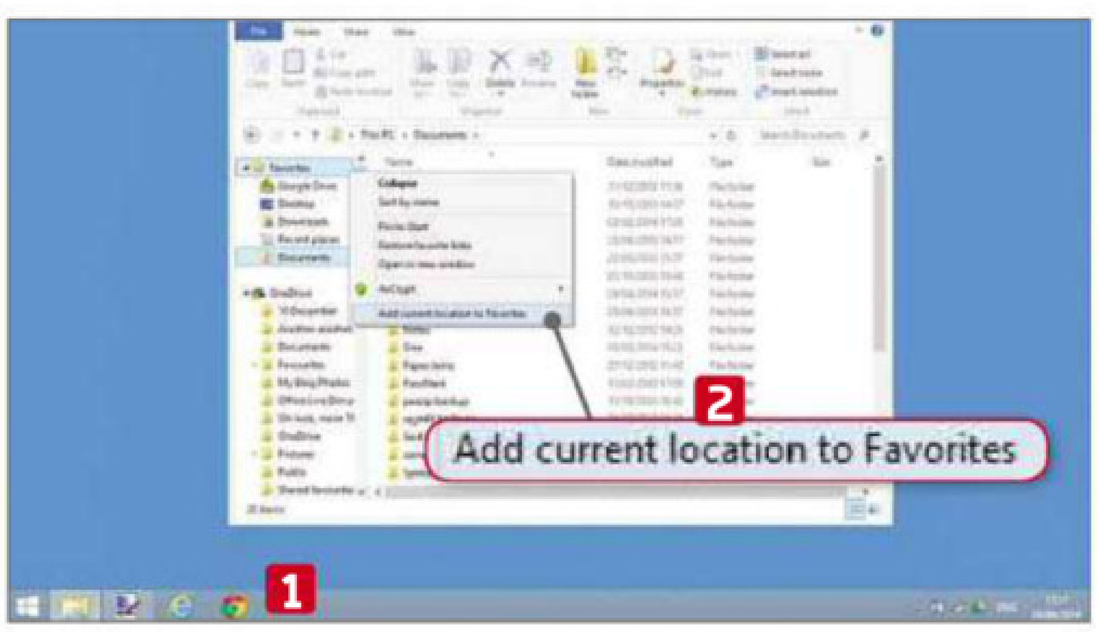
MouseController: bit.ly/mousecon349 | **10 mins** | **XP, Vista, 7, 8+**



1 To start recording, press the F9 key. Perform the actions you want the software to remember and repeat, then press F9 again to stop recording. If you'd rather use a different function key, just click the down arrow and select a key from the menu. 1



2 To play back your recording, click the 'start playback' button 1 or press F11 (if you haven't set playback to a different key). If your mouse movements look slow, open the 'Time stretch' menu 2 to double the speed, or choose Custom to make it even faster. 3



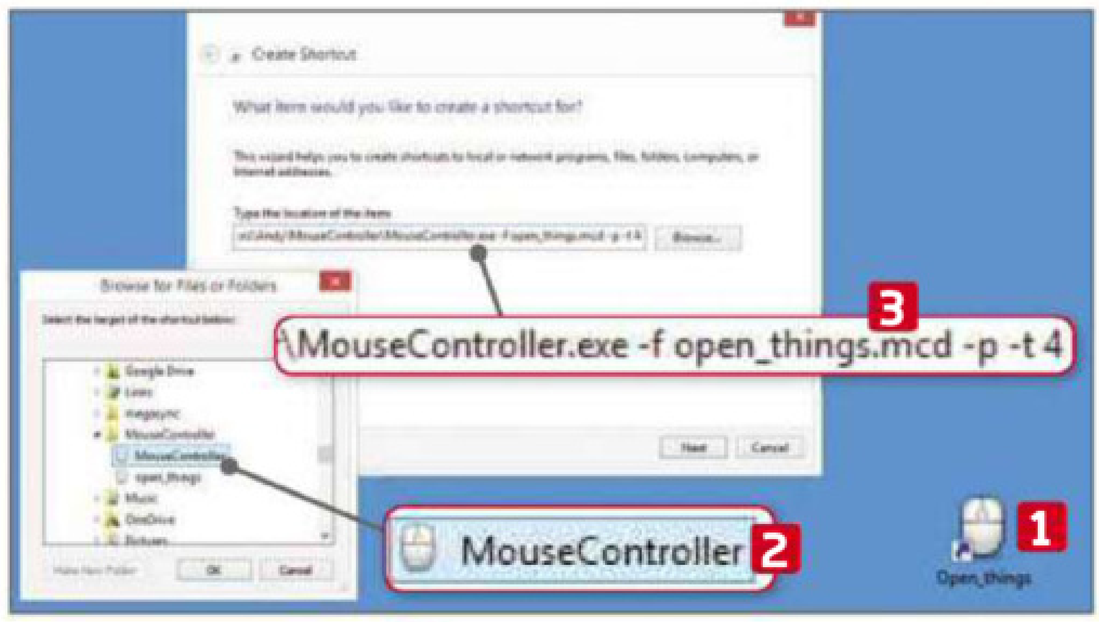
3 To make sure that MouseController's mouse clicks hit their mark, start from a blank Desktop, so other applications don't get in the way; use pinned taskbar buttons to launch software; 1 and add locations to Windows Explorer Favourites by right-clicking Favorites. 2



4 To perform repetitive jobs, tick the Repeat or 'Repeat every' boxes. 1 Enter a number next to Repeat to run the mouse sequence that many times. 'Repeat every' can be counted in seconds or minutes, chosen from the drop-down menu. 2 Again, enter the number in the box next to it. 3



5 Save files in the same folder as the software. To associate them with the program so they can be double-clicked to load, right-click an MCD file and choose Properties. Click Change, 1 then 'Look for another app...' (Windows 8) 2 or the Browse button (Windows 7) to find the MouseController.exe file.

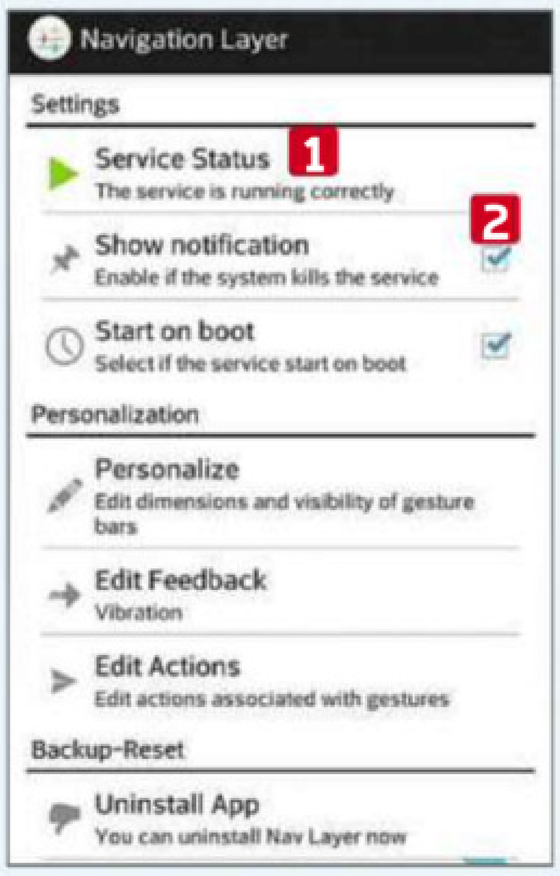


6 Create a shortcut 1 to run a MouseController file using command-line options. Right-click the Desktop, choose New, then Shortcut. Find the MouseController.exe file, 2 add a space, then type `–f filename.mcd –p –t 4` 3 to play the MouseController file called 'filename' at quadruple speed.

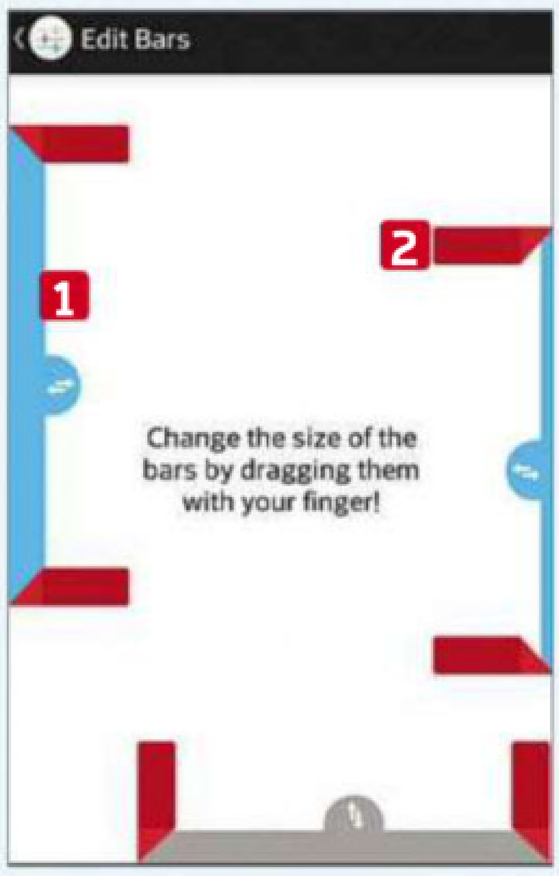
Make Android even easier to use

Have you ever wished there was a simpler way to quickly navigate between Android apps or jump straight to built-in Android tools such as the Task Manager? Navigation Layer is an 'invisible' app that lets you do precisely that. By swiping or tapping the edges of the screen, you can perform a range of functions from viewing your recent apps to sending your device to sleep.

Navigation Layer: bit.ly/navlay349 | **10 mins** | **Android 4.0+**



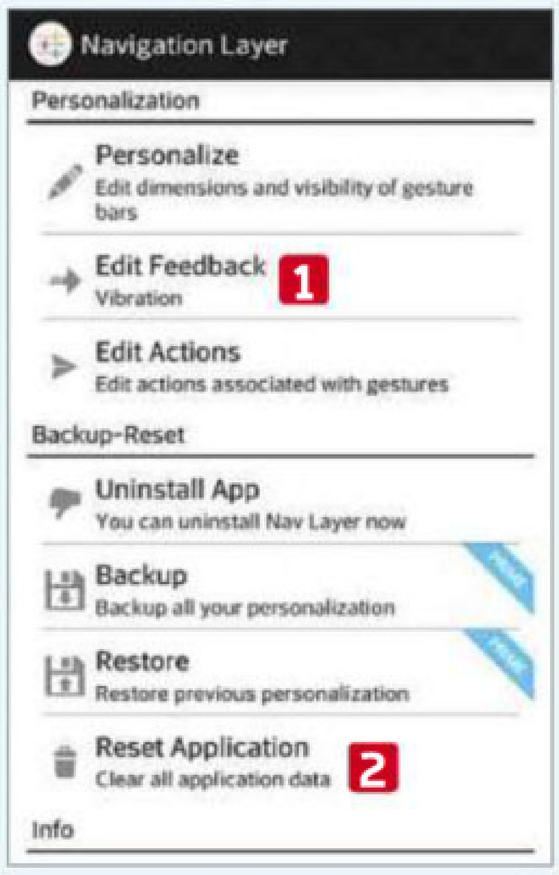
1 Download and run Navigation Layer. Tap Service Status [1] to activate the app, then tick the box next to 'Show notification' [2] to ensure that it continues to run in the background. This results in a Nav Layer notification permanently appearing in your notification drawer.



2 Make sure that 'Start on boot' is also ticked, so that the service automatically restarts if you reboot your device. Next, select Personalize to set up and customise the app's navigation bars. You can choose the length [1] and width [2] of the navigation bars by tapping Edit Bars.



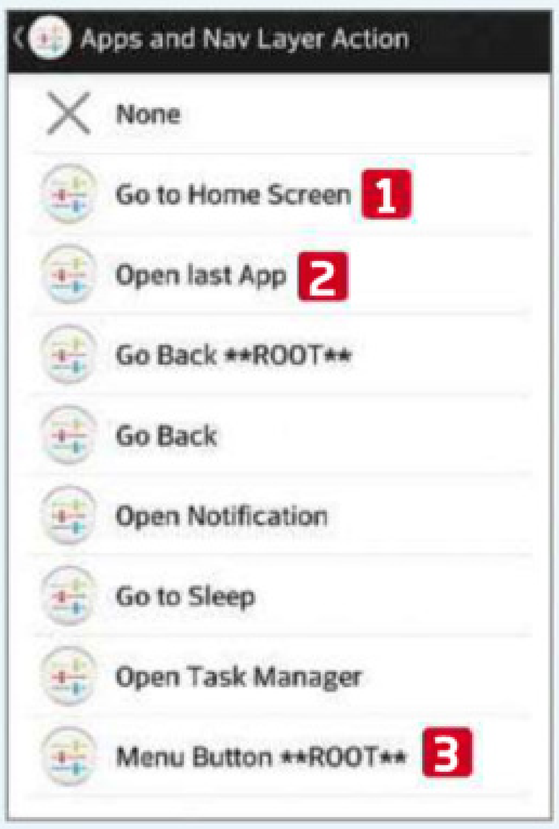
3 By default, only the left and right bars are enabled, but you can also enable the bottom bar by ticking the appropriate box. [1] The bars glow faintly on dark menus, so if you want to disable this feature, tick 'Hide gestures glow'. [2]



4 Your phone will vibrate when you successfully perform a gesture in a navigation bar. From the app's home screen, select Edit Feedback [1] if you want to turn this off or hear a sound confirmation instead. You can also revert the app to factory settings at any time by selecting Reset Application. [2]



5 In Edit Actions, you can choose the actions associated with different gestures. Each navigation bar lets you use a long-press, [1] double-tap [2] or a variety of directional swipes to perform different actions. [3] Tap a gesture, then 'Apps and Nav Layer Action' and select None if you want to disable it.



6 From the same menu, you can set a variety of actions including 'Go to Home Screen', [1] 'Open last App' [2] and 'Go to Sleep'. Some require Nav Layer to be activated in Accessibility while a few, such as Menu Button, [3] will only work with rooted devices.

Weekend Project

Get to grips with some serious PC DIY to boost your computer's performance



How to...

Upgrade your memory

Upgrading your memory is a simple way to boost your PC's performance. **Wayne Williams** guides you through the process



If your PC is starting to feel a little slow, adding some additional memory could provide a much needed boost. Installing extra memory is one of the easiest physical upgrades you can perform on your PC, but first you'll need to do a little research to find out the type of memory your PC uses, how much you currently have installed and the maximum amount of additional memory your PC can handle. Don't presume that you only need a spare slot or two on your motherboard to add as much memory as you like – there are a couple of restrictions you need to be aware of.

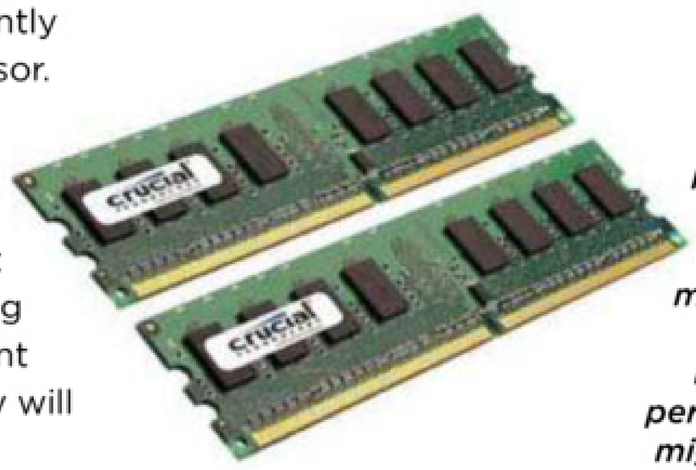
What type of memory do I need?

There are different types of computer memory available, including SDR, DDR, DDR2, DDR3 and DDR4 (DDR stands for Double Data Rate). It's important to know what memory your computer uses because the different varieties aren't compatible with each other. The number of pins and notch positions vary, too, so if your motherboard only supports DDR2, you won't be able to add DDR3 DIMMs (Dual In-Line Memory Modules) to it.

DDR4 is the newest form of memory and it runs twice as fast as DDR3, delivering 50 per cent more bandwidth and running 40 per cent more efficiently. But because it's so new, you can only use it with a new PC, or one with a recently upgraded motherboard and processor.

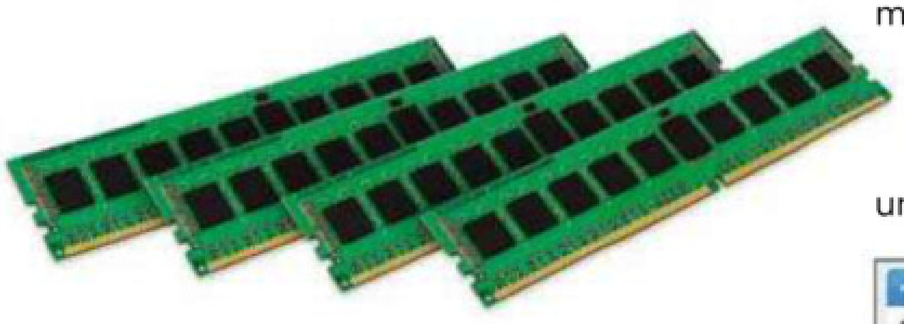
Memory also comes in different speeds. If you're adding new memory alongside existing modules, you'll need to make sure it matches the speed that your existing modules run at. You can mix different speeds, but all the installed memory will run at the slowest rate.

Laptop memory is different from desktop PC memory, so you can't upgrade a notebook using memory modules from an old PC.



Make sure your memory matches or the faster memory's performance might suffer

You don't need to spend a fortune on branded memory sticks, but be careful buying unbranded ones. It might save you some money but it could also lead to system errors, freezes and crashes. Two of the best memory suppliers are Crucial (uk.crucial.com) and Kingston (www.kingston.com/en). You can also shop for memory upgrades at MyMemory (www.mymemory.co.uk)



The new DDR4 memory modules can only be housed in special motherboard slots

How much memory can I add?

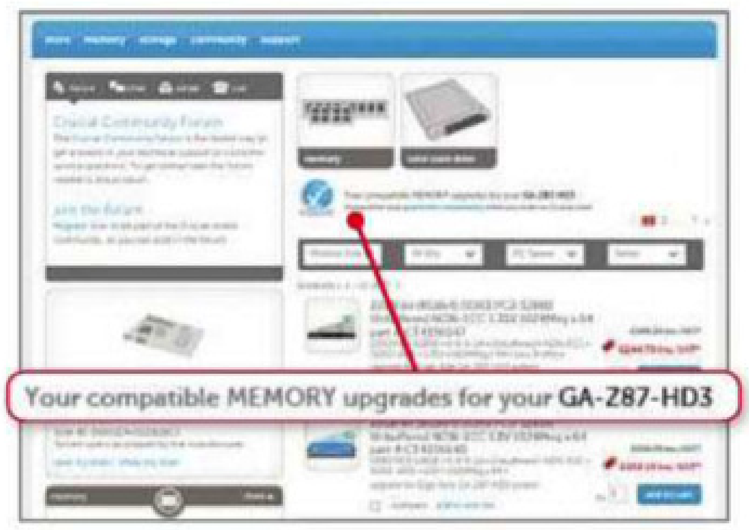
Aside from your personal budget, the amount of memory you can put in your PC is limited by two main factors – the number of free memory slots available and the version of Windows you're running. If you only have one or two free memory slots, you can only add one or two modules, unless you scrap and replace all your existing memory and start afresh (this is worth doing, if you can afford it, because it reduces the risk of clashes).

Windows XP and the 32-bit versions of Windows 7 and 8.1 can only recognise a maximum of 4GB (and use a total of around 3.5GB). The 64-bit Home Premium edition of Windows 7 can use up to 16GB, while the Professional and Ultimate editions can access up to 192GB. The 64-bit version of Windows 8.1 supports up to 128GB while the 64-bit Windows 8.1 Professional supports up to 512GB.

You can, of course, add more memory by upgrading to a different version of Windows. You will only be able to run a 64-bit edition of the operating system if your PC has a 64-bit chip.

How do I know what memory I need?

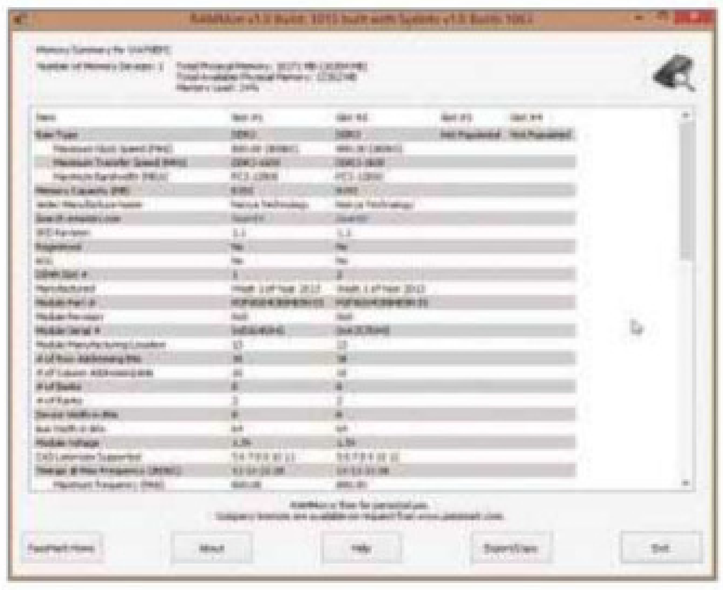
The Crucial System Scanner (bit.ly/crucialscan349) will tell you the type of memory your PC is using and the type you need to buy for an upgrade. The tool will, naturally enough, recommend memory from Crucial, but you're under no obligation to buy from them.



Crucial's scanner tells you the type of memory you can use to upgrade your PC

Alternatively, you can try PassMark RAMMon (bit.ly/rammon349). This tool scans your PC and tells you everything you need to know about its memory, including the total amount installed, which slots are in use, the module type, the speed, who made it and when it was manufactured. It will also reveal how much memory is available for your PC to use and the current memory load.

The Windows Experience Index (WEI) in Windows 7 and 8 rates various PC components, including the memory, so you can get an idea whether adding more will have any noticeable effect.



PassMark RAMMon provides detailed information about your PC's memory

Microsoft removed this feature from Windows 8.1, but you can get it back by installing the ChrisPC Win Experience Index 2 (bit.ly/winexindex349).

Once you're ready to install your memory, follow our Mini Workshop below.



The Windows Experience Index tool rates your PC's components out of 10

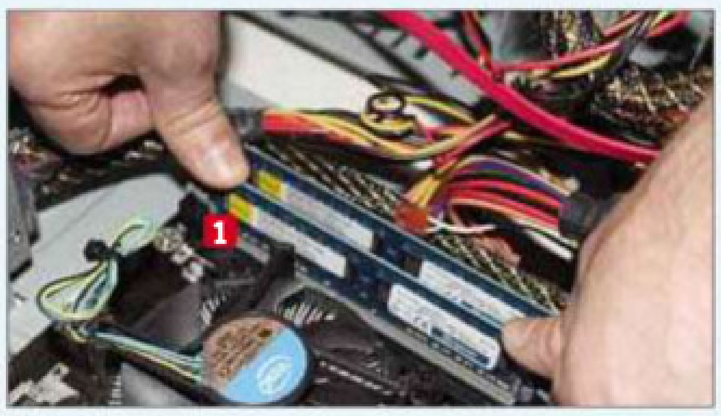
Add memory to a laptop

The process of adding memory to a laptop is the same as installing it in a desktop computer, except you'll probably only have one slot, so will need to replace your existing module with a single, higher capacity one. Power down the laptop and remove the battery. Now unscrew the back of the case, locate the memory, then pull the locking levers free and

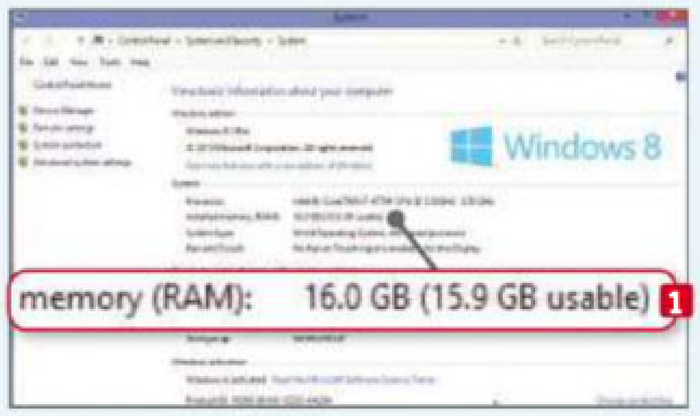
MINI WORKSHOP | Install extra memory in a desktop PC



1 Switch off the computer at the wall socket and earth yourself by touching a non-painted metal part of the PC's case. Open the case and lay it flat on the floor. Locate the memory sockets 1 and make sure you have clear access to them. You may need to move or unplug any cables or devices that are in the way. 2



2 Open a memory slot by pressing down on each locking tab in turn. If you're replacing existing memory, pull the chip out and set it aside. Insert your new memory module, making sure the notches align. It will only go in one way. With a thumb on each end, press down firmly until you hear a click and the locking tabs pop up. 1



3 Add any other modules, then put your PC back together and turn it on. The new memory should be listed on the boot-up screen. You can check how much memory is available to Windows by going to Start, right-clicking Computer and clicking Properties. You'll see your installed memory listed in the System section. 1

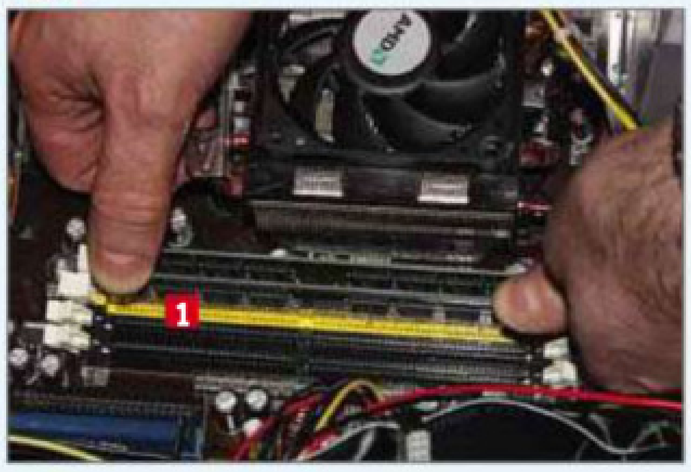
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MINI WORKSHOP | Troubleshoot memory problems



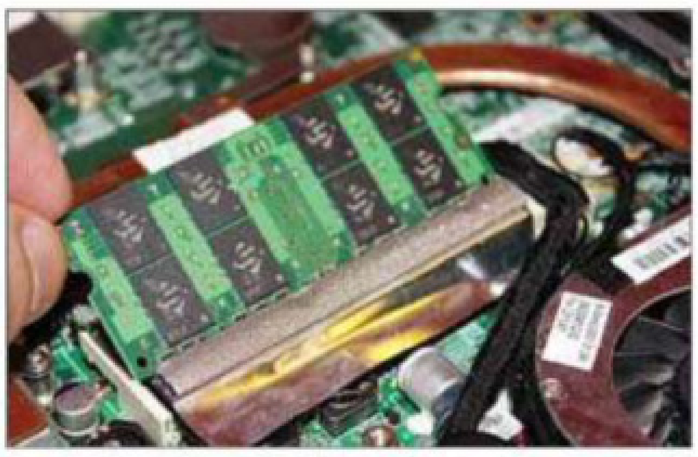




1 Memory modules click firmly into place but they can sometimes come loose if you move your PC around a lot. It's worth unseating and reseating all the modules in turn. Turn off your PC at the wall, earth yourself, push the tabs either side of each memory slot down and out and then remove and reinsert the modules. 1

2 Windows comes with a Memory Diagnostic tool that will check for potential problems. Open the Start menu (or Start screen in Windows 8.1) and search for 'memory'. You can choose to restart your PC now and check for problems 1 or have the scan run when you next reboot. 2

3 If you need more information, try MemTest86 (www.memtest86.com). This is very good at finding errors on 32-bit PCs, even if they're intermittent. To use it, you have to download the program and burn it to CD or write it to a USB stick, then boot from it. Choose your options, 1 then click Start Test. 2



Laptops usually use single memory modules so you'll need to replace memory, rather than add it, to upgrade

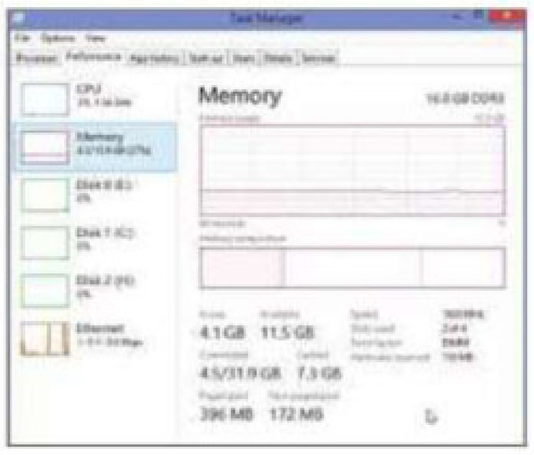
remove the existing memory. Insert the replacement and push down until it clicks into position. Now reassemble your laptop and turn it on to make sure everything is working fine.

Monitor memory use

Certain programs, such as Firefox, can consume large amounts of memory (especially if it's running Adblock Plus). Although there are plenty of add-ons that can free up memory and optimise its usage, Windows actually does a very good job of this by itself.

You can keep an eye on how much memory is being used in the Windows Task Manager. Right-click the taskbar, click Start Task Manager and look under Performance. If memory usage spikes, consider closing and restarting any suspect software. In the case of Firefox, it's worth restarting the browser every hour or so if you're spending a lot of time on the internet.

If you think you're having problems with your memory, follow our Mini Workshop's step-by-step guide to troubleshooting memory, above.



Use Task Manager to monitor how your memory is being used

Use a USB stick for extra memory

The Windows ReadyBoost feature, available in Windows 7 and 8.1, lets you use one or more USB flash memory drives as a cache for the Windows swap file. This can improve performance on a slow PC that has limited memory, but only on a PC using a mechanical hard drive, not an SSD (solid-state drive). Insert a blank memory stick into a spare port on the PC (you can't use a USB hub for this) and click Speed Up My System. Select the option to dedicate the device to ReadyBoost.

If you don't see this pop-up when you insert the device, right-click it and choose Properties, then click the ReadyBoost tab. ■

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- UK based hosting
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- UK Telephone support
- 30 day money back guarantee
- Free domain name
- Auto install free over 300 apps including Wordpress
Exclusive 20% OFF for Webuser readers enter promotional code webuser14
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Web User's Top Tips

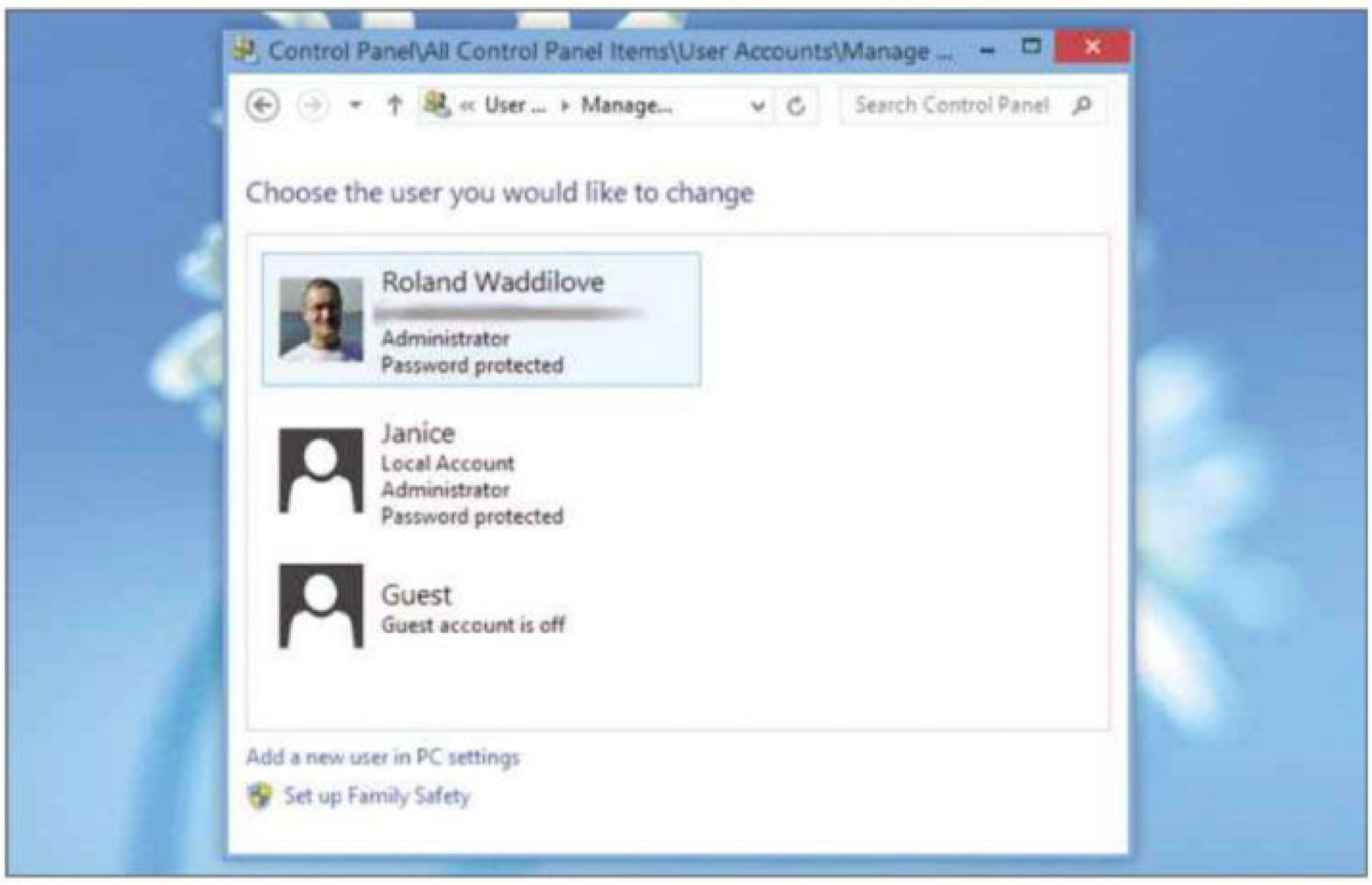
Take control of user accounts and limit what other people can do on your computer

TOP TIPS FOR WINDOWS USER ACCOUNTS

Create a back-up administrator

The first thing you should do when you buy a new computer or reinstall Windows is create a second user account. If you have only one account, and it develops a fault or some files get corrupted, you may not be able to start Windows. However, if you have a second account, you can often use it to repair the fault, or at least recover your documents, photos, music and other files.

Open the Control Panel and go to User Accounts, click 'Manage another account' and click 'Add a new user in PC settings' (Windows 8) or 'Create a new account' (Windows 7). You should make this an administrator account.



Never have just one account on your computer – always add another administrator

Add your family

As well as a back-up admin account, you should create user accounts for each member of your family, even if they aren't going to be used immediately. This is because programs sometimes fail to register on accounts set up after the software was installed, so it's best to have all the accounts you need set up from the beginning.

Increase your security

When you create a new account, you can choose standard user, administrator or child (Windows 8 only). Standard and child users have limited access to the system and software settings, to prevent children, novices or unauthorised users from changing something they shouldn't. Make yourself an admin, with everyone else a 'standard' or 'child' (but remember to have a back-up admin account, as described in our main tip, above).

If you see words that `look like they've been typed in a typewriter`, follow the instructions and type them exactly as they appear, paying close attention to spaces and punctuation.

Create a password-reset disk

You won't forget the login details for a PC you use every day, but if you ever need to fire up an old computer you haven't used for a while, it's all too easy to find you've forgotten its password. A password-reset disk solves the problem. Go to User Accounts in the Control Panel and click 'Create a password reset disk' on the left. It saves a small file to a USB flash memory drive. If you try to log into your account on the welcome screen and use the wrong password, an option is displayed to reset it. The Password Reset Wizard appears and you can create a new password for the account.

Windows 8 has two types of account and you can either sign in with your Microsoft ID or use a local account. A local account is like Windows 7 and lets you create a password-reset disk.

Your Microsoft ID is stored online, so you can use any computer with an internet connection to access your account and change the password. On this type of account, the option to create a password-reset disk doesn't appear.

Hide programs

If a program can't be seen, it's less likely to be used, so removing software from the Start menu or Start screen is a handy way of restricting what can be accessed on your PC. Each user has private and public Start menu items, and by moving items from the public or other users' private

menus to your own private menu will hide them so that only you can see them.

Open Explorer and go to:

C:\Programs\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu

Move items you want to hide to your own private Start menu at:

C:\Users\YourName\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu

You'll need to show hidden files and folders, so in Windows 7 press Alt in Explorer and select Tools, Folder Options, View, 'Show hidden files and folders'.

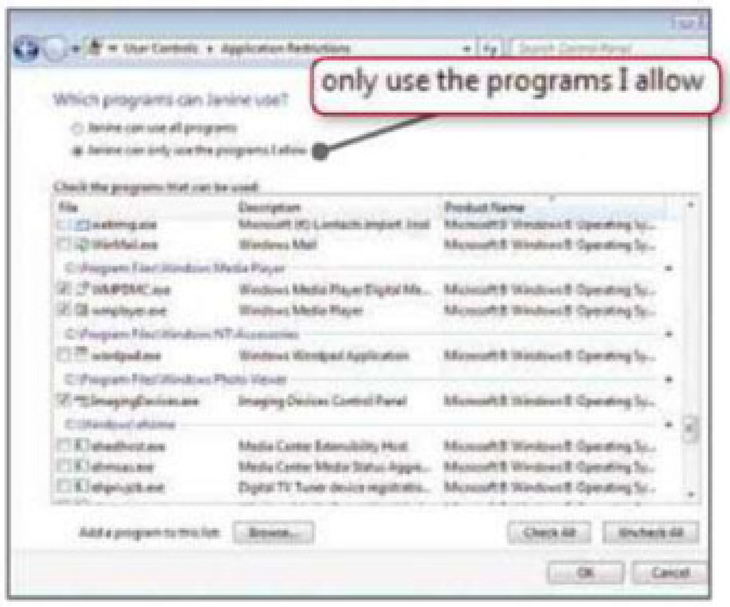
In Windows 8, this setting is on the View tab in the ribbon. Also move Desktop shortcuts from

C:\Users\Public\Desktop to

C:\Users\YourName\Desktop.

Use Parental Controls in Windows 7

Parental Controls is designed to restrict the programs children can access, but you can use it to limit any user. Go to User Accounts in the Control Panel and click 'Manage another account'. Click 'Set up Parental Controls' and select the user account. Select 'On, enforce current settings' and click 'Allow and block specific programs'. On the next screen, select '[User] can only use the programs I allow'. Use the tick boxes to allow or block any of the programs on your computer.



Parental Controls allow you to choose which programs a user account can access

Use Family Safety in Windows 8

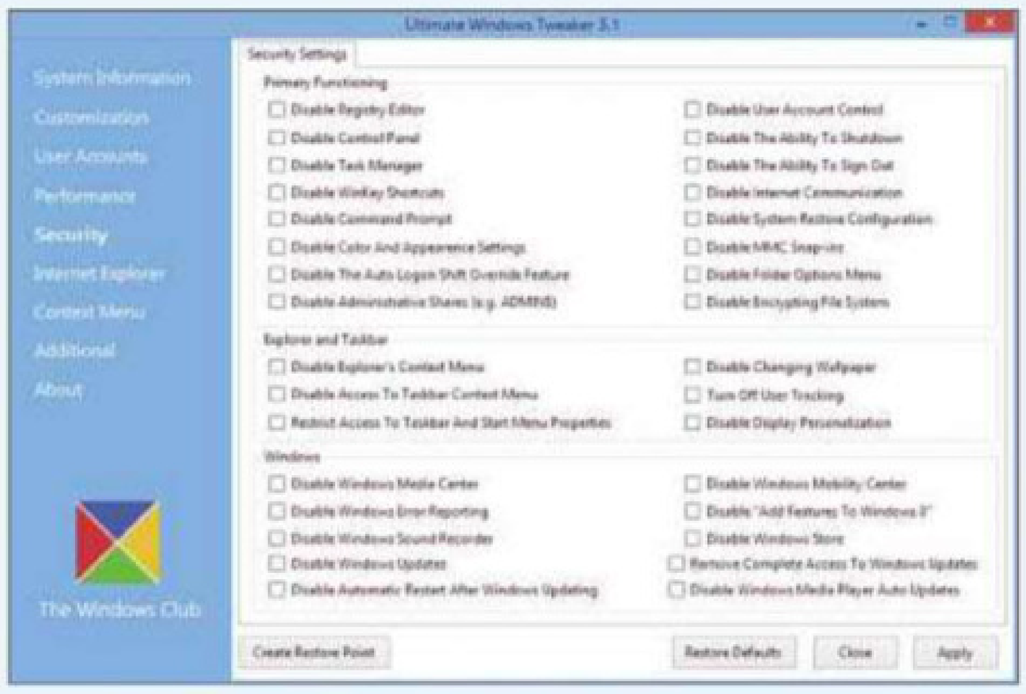
Windows 8 replaces Parental Controls with Family Safety in the Control Panel. This is available for child accounts, which is a special account type in addition to the usual administrator and standard user. Click 'Manage settings on the Family Safety website' to open a browser and log in with your Microsoft ID. Select a user and click 'App restrictions'. Turn it on and use the Allow and Block options to choose which software can be used.

ADVANCED TIPS

Customise your Windows user accounts

Lock down user accounts

Windows doesn't provide much in the way of customising your user account, but there are plenty of other tools you can use. For example, Ultimate Windows Tweaker 2.2 for Windows 7 (bit.ly/tweak7349) has lots of useful settings that let you completely disable the Control Panel; disable folder options; remove the security tab when you go to file properties; remove all access to Windows Update; hide the network from Network Neighbourhood; disable Remote Desktop Sharing; and block access to Task Manager and the Registry Editor.



Use Ultimate Windows Tweaker to restrict an account's access to your PC's settings and features

All these settings will affect the account that is currently logged in, so be careful if yours is the only account on your computer, because you may end up locking yourself out! Create another user, then temporarily set that account as an administrator. Log on with the account and then run the customisation tool. All the configuration settings are simple tick boxes, so tick the restrictions you want, log out, then log back into your own account. Finally, set the restricted account to 'standard'. These customisations allow you to properly lock down an account and stop anyone messing with your computer.

Ultimate Windows Tweaker 3 for Windows 8 (bit.ly/tweak8349) is a newer version of the tool designed for Microsoft's latest operating system. It has more tweaks than the Windows 7 version and can remove the volume, network, Action Center, clock and battery icons from the taskbar – in fact, it can remove the taskbar completely. You can disable Explorer's context (right-click) menu and the taskbar context menu, lock down the wallpaper so no-one can change it and perform many more settings and tweaks. You may not be able to undo the changes from the account that is locked down, but System Restore will put everything back the way it was.

More customisation options

Desktop Patrol (bit.ly/dpatrol349) is another useful tool for controlling the features a user account can access. Run it and click its icon in the taskbar's notification area. Type the password `patrol` at the prompt. Once the window appears, you can change the password from the Options menu.

Tabs across the centre of the window let you select groups of options and, on the Patrol tab, you select which items you want to patrol (block). You can block access to Internet Explorer, Media Center, Media Player, Control Panel, AutoPlay, downloads, installers, Internet Options, attachment saving and several other useful items.

When setting up the restrictions, be careful not to lock yourself out. In the Patrol Options, you'll find 'Don't Patrol my desktop' and on the Options menu is a setting to run on start-up. You can use either of these to ensure that you don't accidentally lock your own account.



Use Desktop Patrol to limit access to certain Windows features like the Control Panel

Ask the Expert

Roland Waddilove computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at webuser@dennis.co.uk



SECURITY

How safe is XP?

Q A lot has been said about the vulnerability of Windows XP now that Microsoft has withdrawn support for it, but I thought my computer would be safe if I avoid unknown websites, don't download anything and don't open or answer dodgy emails? The warnings I've heard imply that merely visiting a website, or just being online, could lead to an attack on your PC. Is that the case?

Nick Ashby, via email



Stay safe with XP by sticking to reliable websites and installing security software

A Being careful and avoiding potentially unsafe activities, such as opening email attachments, greatly reduces your risk of being infected by viruses, but it won't keep you 100-per-cent safe. Popular websites are often targeted by hackers: only recently Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) and the Sun newspaper (www.thesun.co.uk) were hacked, so it's possible to catch viruses from any website. Your PC can also be infected simply by being connected to the internet, particularly if hackers find new security flaws in the operating system that Microsoft doesn't fix.

To reduce the chance of being infected, avoid the obvious risks and install a security suite that includes anti-virus, anti-spyware and a firewall. However, using an operating system that doesn't get security updates could leave you exposed to more danger than if you were using one that's regularly updated.

HARDWARE

Worn-out remote control

Q The remote control for my Fujitsu Siemens PC has stopped working. Can you help?

Gareth Jones, via email

A Presuming you've tried a fresh set of batteries, it may be that the buttons have worn out. This happens to all remotes eventually. A remote's buttons are usually printed on a rubber sheet with metallic paint underneath, which is what creates an electrical circuit when the button is pressed. Either the paint is worn or it has oxidised and isn't making contact. It might start working again if you disassemble the remote and put more metallic paint on the buttons. There is a useful guide at bit.ly/remote349.

It isn't worth considering professional repair services because they would probably cost more than a replacement. A search on eBay listed several Fujitsu Siemens PC remotes, so if all else fails, just buy a replacement.

GENERAL PC

Update to Windows 8.1

Q I have a year-old laptop and a six-month-old desktop PC, both running Windows 8. I managed to load Windows 8.1 on the laptop, but to use or initiate it, I have to supply a Microsoft account, which I neither have nor particularly want. I believe I can't receive updates for my desktop PC unless I upgrade from Windows 8 to 8.1. Is there a way to load Windows 8.1 without a Microsoft account? I thought that these kinds of unreasonable clauses were not permitted. I wrote to Microsoft UK, but have received no response.

Ian Egerton, via email

A There are good reasons why you need to have Windows 8.1 to get further updates. Even as far back as Windows XP, you had to install Service Pack 1 before installing Service Pack 2, and Service Pack 2 before Service Pack 3. Windows 8.1 is just like a service pack and future updates will rely on it being installed. Updates can be downloaded from Microsoft Download Center. You can get Windows 8.1 from bit.ly/win81update349.

There are advantages to signing in with a Microsoft ID (which you'll already have if you own an Outlook.com, Xbox Live, Windows Phone or Skype account), such as being able to sync settings, documents, photos, email and contacts between your computers. It also lets you download apps and updates from the Windows Store.



Some updates rely on previous updates, so set them to install automatically

GENERAL PC

Port 80 problem

Q Could you please publish an article on how to install XAMPP (www.apachefriends.org) or WampServer (www.wampserver.com/en) web servers on a PC? Whenever I try, Apache won't run due to port 80 being in use. I've run a port checker as an admin, but it won't let me shut down the TCP process. I am at a dead end. XAMPP used to run on my PC before I installed Skype, Amazon Cloud Player and my internet radio server. I have uninstalled all of them, but I still can't get Apache to run.

Adrian Bonnington, via email

A Several applications, including Skype, use port 80 for network communications. You'd be best off configuring the server to use a different port. Go to the Apache folder (for example, C:\wamp\bin\apache\apache2.4.9), open the 'conf' folder and

load 'httpd.conf' into Notepad.

All lines that start with a hash symbol (#) are comments, so ignore them and look for a line near the top that says 'Listen 80'. Change 80 to a port number that isn't being used. There is a list of port numbers and their uses at bit.ly/ports349 and most low numbers are used for one purpose or another. Try 3080, which appears to be unused. There is another line further on in the 'httpd.conf' file, 'ServerName localhost:80'. Change the 80 to your new port number.

Your server should start with the new port number, but instead of typing `localhost:80` or `127.0.0.1:80` into a browser to access your website, you will need to type `localhost:3080` or `127.0.0.1:3080` instead.

INTERNET

Updates without the internet

Q I tend to go on holiday to the same spot each year – a small village in Brittany. I have noticed on many occasions that my laptop downloads and installs updates, even though I am not connected to the internet. There are Wi-Fi connections available, but I am not connected, so what is going on? Am I using other people's connections? Do they know? Could the same be happening on my home connection? Any light you can throw on this would set my mind at rest.

Ewan Brown, via email

A In a nutshell, you could be using other people's Wi-Fi and other people could be using yours. You can't download updates without an internet connection, so the laptop must be connecting to a Wi-Fi network. If a wireless network doesn't have a password, any computer, tablet or phone can automatically connect to it, and this is probably what is happening. Even if a network has a password, you only need to connect once. The details are saved so next time the connection is made automatically. You may have connected your PC to a network in the past and forgotten about it.

If your home Wi-Fi network isn't protected with a password and encryption, then anyone within reach of the signal could use it, including neighbours and passers-by. BT's routers automatically create a Wi-Fi hotspot that BT internet customers can connect to, whether or not it has a password and encryption. Every home with a BT router is a Wi-Fi hotspot and there are five million around the country.

Log onto your router by typing its IP address into a browser and looking for WPA2 encryption in the settings. Turn this on to prevent unauthorised access to your Wi-Fi. If you don't know what your router's IP address is, check by pressing Windows+R, typing `cmd` then Enter, then `ipconfig` and Enter, then looking for the IP address next to Default Gateway.



Your computer may automatically connect to open wireless networks

INTERNET

Fix 503 errors

Q I'm running Internet Explorer 11 on Windows 7. On some websites, I get a '503 service unavailable' error. Could you tell me the cause, and if there is a solution? I am running Avast Free Antivirus (www.avast.com) and Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org).

John Jarvis, via email

A A 503 error is one of a whole series of error codes used with browsers and servers. Any error code that starts with a 5 indicates a problem with the server you are trying to access, so it is very unlikely to be your computer. Error 503 means that the server is unavailable for some reason. It may have been taken offline for maintenance or is temporarily overloaded with visitors, for example.

Try switching off and restarting the router and the computer. It's unlikely to have any effect because this error code is rarely caused by a problem at your end. Wait and try the site in an hour or two to see if it's up and running again.

HARDWARE

Disappearing DVD files

Q As a researcher, I have scanned several books and saved them to DVD as PDF files. I now find that Windows Explorer on my Vista PC clearly displays the files, but it either cannot find them or cannot open them. My first thought was the DVD drive might be faulty, but the drive on my Windows 8.1 laptop, which is less than a year old, produces the same results. Is there a freeware program that can get around the problem?

John Lockett, via email

A Two computers have failed to read the disc's contents, which means the fault is almost certainly with the disc. Trying it in a third computer, such as a friend's or work PC, would confirm this. It's worth trying because sometimes a drive in one computer copes with disc errors better than another.

The next option is to try recovery software. The free trial version of Recover Disc (recoverdisc.com) lets you recover two files per day. If you used it every day of the 30-day free trial, you could recover 60 files. CD Recovery Toolbox (www.oemailrecovery.com) is a free tool that can recover files from damaged CDs, DVDs, and Blu-ray discs. Roadkil's Unstoppable Copier (roadkil.net) skips over bad files and recovers later ones that might be OK.

MOBILE

Security on Fire

Q I want free software to protect my Kindle Fire from viruses. Which program would you recommend?

Felix Yates, via email

A Stick with free Android versions of PC favourites such as Bitdefender (www.bitdefender.co.uk) and Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org). Both are in the Amazon Appstore in the Utilities section. Use the search tool to find them.

People often don't bother with security software for Android devices but the risk of malware infection has significantly increased.

Avoid unknown apps with no reviews and stick to ones that people recommend. The app comments are your best guide to safety.



Free anti-malware tools are available for Android and can be downloaded from the Amazon store



This fortnight Roland has been tracking walks on his phone while holidaying in Wales

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others, visit forum.webuser.co.uk



TOP TIP

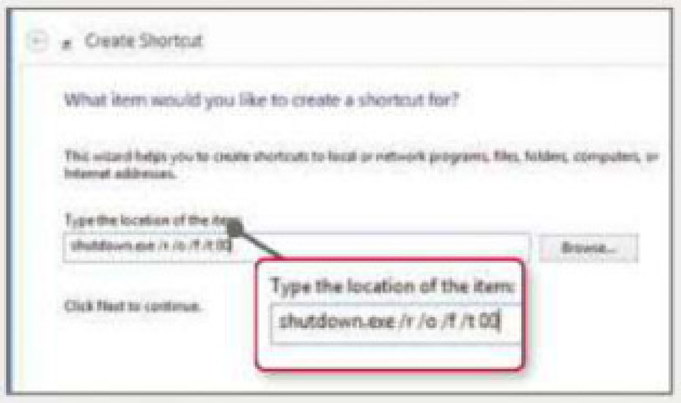
£25 winner

WINDOWS 8

Use advanced start-up to fix problems

If you want to Refresh or Reset your PC, or fix a problem using Windows 8's advanced tools, you can use the operating system's 'Advanced startup options'. To access them, press Windows+X, select Command Prompt and type `shutdown.exe /r /o /f /t 00`. Press Enter and your computer will reboot into the 'Advanced startup options' menu, giving you the option to Continue, Troubleshoot or 'Turn off your PC'. Select Troubleshoot to access Windows 8's diagnostic and repair tools, including Safe Mode.

For quicker access to the Advanced startup options, you can set a shortcut that reboots your computer into this



Create a shortcut to quickly access the 'Advanced startup options'

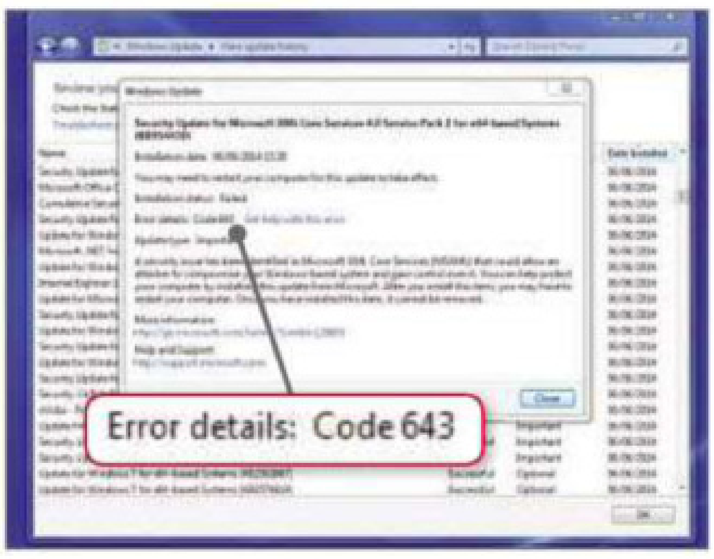
menu. Right-click the Desktop, choose New, Shortcut and in the box labelled 'Type the location of the item', type `shutdown.exe /r /o /f /t 00`. Click Next to name the shortcut.

David Webb, via email

GENERAL PC

Check your Windows Update history

Because many of us set Windows Update to 'Install updates automatically', it's a good idea to check from time to time that it's working correctly – after all, unpatched flaws could leave your PC vulnerable to attack. Click Start, type `Windows update` and select the program. Click 'View update history' to see a list of updates that have been installed on your PC. This is automatically sorted by Date Installed, so if you can see some recent dates at the top of the



Failed updates should be accompanied by an error code

list, that's the best indication that Windows Update is working properly.

The list also shows the status of updates. If any are labelled Failed, you should find out why. Double-clicking the update's name will tell you if it has a specific error code, which you can then look up with a simple Google search. Remember to also include the update number, so that you can find out if others have experienced the same problem.

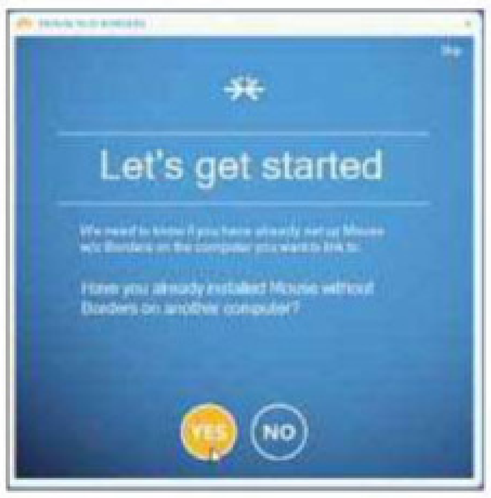
Max Westall, via Email

SOFTWARE

Control two PCs with one mouse and keyboard

I often use my desktop PC's monitor as a second display for my laptop, so that I can run a different program on each screen. I find it especially handy because I can copy text between applications without having to minimise any windows.

Last week, after unplugging my Desktop PC's monitor for the umpteenth time, I thought how handy it would be if a program let me control both computers at the same time, using one mouse and keyboard, so I could copy text and move files between them. This would save me the trouble of messing around with any wires and even allow me to use software on the desktop computer that I don't have installed on my laptop. Incredibly, such a program does exist: Microsoft's Garage project 'Mouse without Borders' (bit.ly/mouse349) lets you control up to four computers using one mouse and keyboard. Like when you use two monitors side-by-side, this nifty program lets you drag your cursor off the edge of one screen to start using the one next to it. It's completely changed the way I work and I've only had it for a few days!



Microsoft's 'Mouse without Borders' lets you control multiple PCs with one mouse

Brian Parker, via email

HARDWARE

Portrait monitors

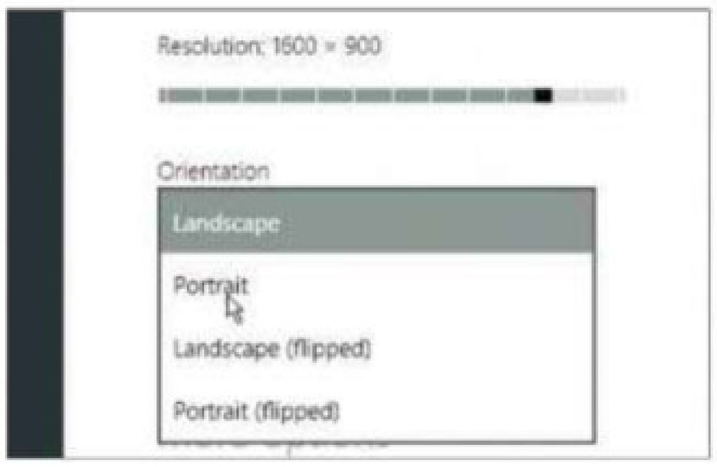
Nearly all computer monitors are wider than they are tall. This letterbox shape is very useful for watching movies and displaying windows side by side, but it's not so good at displaying web pages and documents, which tend to be taller than they are wide. For this reason, some monitors are able to swivel through 90 degrees, so they can display both landscape and portrait mode. I bought one recently and it's really useful.

You can't just put a monitor on its side, though. If you use Windows 8, you have to go to the Charms bar on the right (or click Windows+C) and click Settings, 'Change PC settings', 'PC and devices', Display. There is an Orientation menu with Landscape and Portrait options. Select Portrait and then turn your monitor on its side. Any monitor can do

this, but one with a swivel stand is obviously easier to reposition.

If you're using an older version of Windows, you can access this option from the Control Panel – click Display then 'Adjust resolution' to see the Orientation menu.

Andrew Thompson, via email



If your monitor can work on its side, select Portrait as its screen orientation

Web User says: See our review of HD monitors in our Group Test on page 20.

WINDOWS 8

Update to fix Store Broker

I bought a Windows 8 computer at Christmas that was fine until recently, when it started to run slowly. I opened Task Manager and found that something called Store Broker was using over 50 per cent of the processor. I don't know why it was doing this, but the solution was easy enough. I opened Windows Update and found one recommended update and one optional update. After installing both, the computer was back to normal. This could be useful for other people with a similar problem.

Amy Ryan, via email

GENERAL PC

Search for vowels

There are lots of settings in the Control Panel and if you don't know where something is, what it might be called or even if there is a setting for what you are looking for, the search box in the top right-hand corner can help. To get a scrollable list of many of the Control Panel's settings, simply enter a single vowel into the search box. All words contain vowels, so entering one produces a long list of Control Panel settings. Type the letter 'e' to see what I mean.

Mike Johnston, via email

GENERAL PC

Remove pointless search for solutions

I haven't seen the infamous blue screen of death for a long time because it seems that modern programs can crash without forcing you to reboot Windows. When one stops working, a message appears saying that the program has stopped and Windows is searching for a solution. I can't ever recall a time when Windows actually found a solution, so it seems to be a pointless feature.

After a little digging around, I found out how to turn this message off. In the Control Panel, open Action Center and click 'Change Action Center settings'. Go to the bottom of the window and click 'Problem reporting settings' to display another window that contains the option 'Never check for solutions'. It says this isn't recommended, but if no solutions are ever found, what's the point of it? Select it and you won't have to wait for the 'No solution was found' message.

Tom Sanderson, via email

SOFTWARE

Shut programs instantly

There are several options, including using Task Manager (Ctrl+Shift+Esc), that let you stop individual processes running on your PC. However, I recently discovered a free program called ProcessKO (bit.ly/proko349) that makes closing programs even easier, especially those with multiple processes running. Once you've launched ProcessKO and clicked the box to confirm you know what you're doing, it lets you close or restart any program from your notification area.



ProcessKO can close programs with a single click

Simply right-click the ProcessKO icon, select 'Instant K.O.' and choose the appropriate program. You can also use the Restart feature, but remember that both options will force the program to shut instantly, so you will not be able to rescue any unsaved data.

I really like the application's Favourites feature, which gives you shortcut buttons to close any program with a single click. I often use it to launch my favourite software, too, which you can do by right-clicking the icons and selecting Run. ProcessKO even includes a handy option that lets you shut down or restart your PC instantly, regardless of any unsaved documents.

Tim Norton, via email

SOFTWARE

Download free fonts

Windows comes with a number of pre-installed fonts ranging from the widely used Arial to the often-derided Comic Sans. However, if you want to be more adventurous, I've discovered a site called



Dafont.com has an enormous library of free fonts

www.dafont.com that offers an enormous selection of free typefaces. Its library includes everything from cartoon fonts to typewriter fonts, as well as a range of themed dingbats including computer games and sports. Many of the fonts are only for personal use, but I've found them ideal for brightening up home-made birthday cards. If you're feeling brave, you can submit your own font to the library, and the site also has a helpful forum if you are trying to identify a font you've seen elsewhere.

Once you've found a font you like, simply click Download, open the downloaded file and click Install.

Willibobs, Web User Forums

SECURITY

Stop viruses disabling Malwarebytes Anti-Malware

Malwarebytes Chameleon (www.malwarebytes.org/chameleon) is a handy tool that can be used to get Malwarebytes Anti-Malware running when your PC is already infected.

If you have the paid-for version, you can enable its self-protection module, which stops the program from being modified by malware that could prevent it from starting. Go to Settings, Advanced Settings and then tick 'Enable self-protection module'.

If you have not enabled this option or you only have the free version of the software (where the Advanced Settings menu will be greyed out), you can still access Chameleon. Click Start, All Programs, Malwarebytes Anti-Malware. In Tools, you'll find Malwarebytes Anti-Malware Chameleon, which shows a number of alternative buttons you can use to try to launch the program.

Madeline, Web User Forums



Use Chameleon to launch Malwarebytes Anti-Malware on an infected PC



Readers' Helpdesk

Our pick of the best solutions posted on our reader forums. Visit forum.webuser.co.uk – it's friendly and free!

SOFTWARE

Is BatteryCare safe to use?

Q I've not been particularly impressed with my laptop's battery life, so when I came across an article entitled 'Make your laptop's battery last much longer' (this was not in *Web User*), I followed its recommendation to install BatteryCare (batterycare.net). However, after downloading the application and running its set-up file, Norton Internet Security identified it as a risk and recommended that I remove it from my computer. Can you tell me if this program is safe to install and, if so, how good it is?

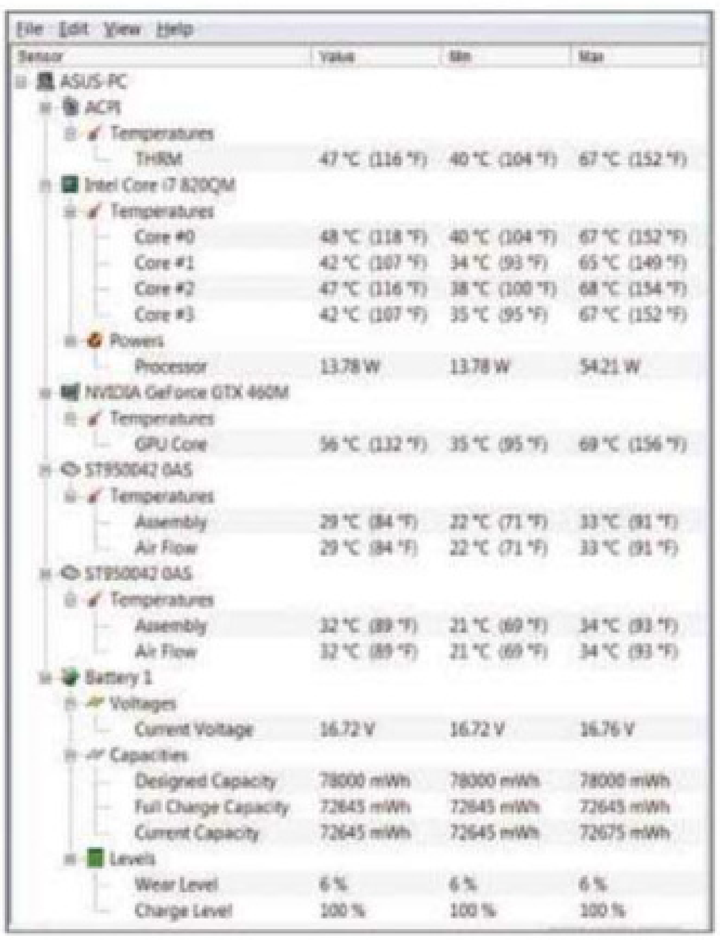
Teddyboy, Web User Forums

A I don't know the program, but Norton may have identified it as a false positive (a harmless program incorrectly labelled as malware). However, I can't see how running an additional program will help to extend your laptop's battery life.

To identify problems with your battery's efficiency, open Command Prompt as an administrator, type `powercfg –energy`, then press Enter. To open the report, copy the file C:\windows\system32\energy-report .html to the Desktop and double-click it.

The BatteryCare website appears to offer some good tips on looking after your battery (bit.ly/battery349) and HWMonitor (bit.ly/monitor349) will tell you how much your battery has degraded. High temperatures are the biggest threat to battery life, so as well as using HWMonitor to check the state of your battery, you can use it to occasionally monitor the temperature of the CPU and graphics chips, depending on how many sensors your laptop has.

Cantrel, Web User Forums



Check your battery's wear with HWMonitor

SOFTWARE

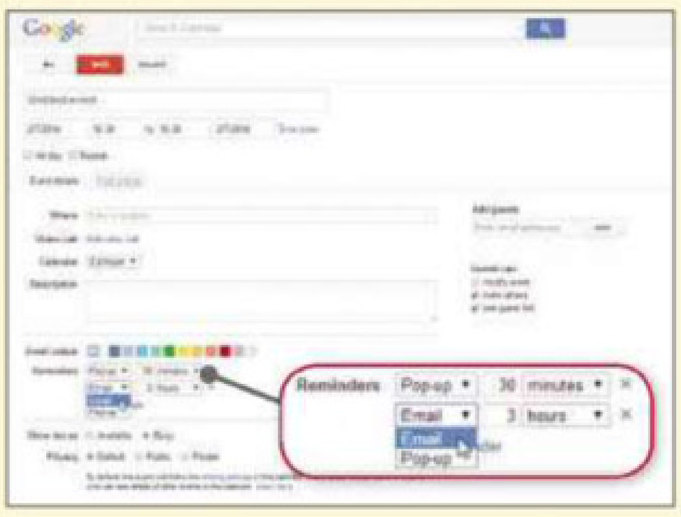
Can I get free email reminders?

Q Can anyone please recommend a good reminder service? I'd like to receive email reminders for events such as birthdays and anniversaries.

Nathan, Web User Forums

A Toodledo (www.toodledo.com) is my reminder service of choice. It's web based but also has a smartphone app, so you can carry your reminders with you. You can also set it to email you a list of reminders at the start of each day.

If you use Gmail or Yahoo, you can use their calendars to create single or recurring events with simple email reminders. Windows Live Mail and Outlook.com also have calendars you can use for this purpose.



You can use Google Calendar to set up diary entries with email reminders

TheTechGuy and ezyduzzit, Web User Forums

SECURITY

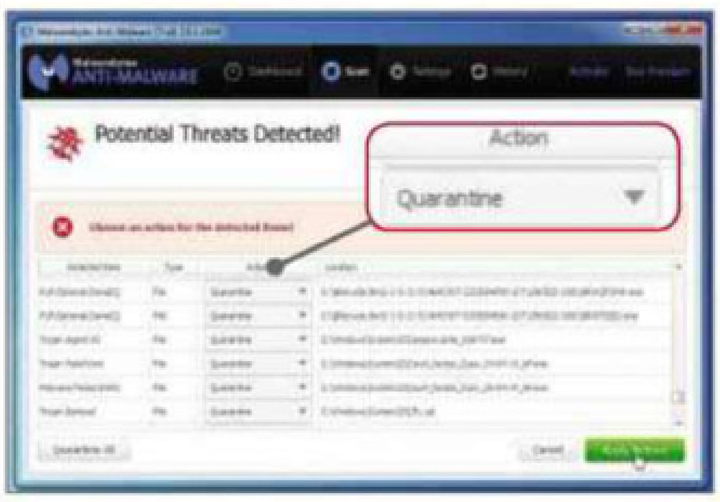
Why are CryptoPrevent files being quarantined?

Q After installing CryptoPrevent (bit.ly/cryptoprevent349), Malwarebytes Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org) immediately quarantined two of its files. Does this mean CryptoPrevent is infected? Will it still work properly now that those files are unavailable?

Mal23, Web User Forums

A Others users have reported the same problem on the Malwarebytes Anti-Maware forum (bit.ly/mbam349) and CryptoPrevent has published an explanation on its own website (bit.ly/crypto349). CryptoPrevent is not infected, so Anti-Malware's detections are false positives, which can be excluded using the drop-down menus on the scan results page.

Madeline, Web User Forums



Exclude false positives using the Action drop-down button on the results page

HARDWARE

Which USB flash memory drive is the most reliable?

Q Can anybody recommend a brand of 16GB flash drive that I can buy on eBay, such as Kingston, SanDisk or Lexar?

NE5, Web User Forums

A I have drives by SanDisk, Kingston, Buffalo and Samsung, and I've not had a single problem with any of them. Just make sure you buy from a reputable

supplier. Personally, I would avoid eBay, because there's always a risk you could end up with a poor-quality, fake product. Have a look at www.7dayshop.com, which includes user ratings for all its products. Remember to look at the read/write speed, because some can be quite slow and faster ones are pricier.

Doublell and Helmut, Web User Forums



7dayshop.com offers a wide range of flash drives and memory cards

GENERAL PC

How is a 32-bit operating system different from 64-bit?

Q I'm thinking of buying a used laptop with Windows 7 because I've been put off Windows 8 by the reviews. However, I'm not sure about the difference between 32- and 64-bit. Can someone enlighten, please?

Hillbilly, Web User Forums

A The Microsoft FAQs at bit.ly/faqs349 should answer your query, but bear in mind that some deal with upgrading an existing system to Windows 7.

Where memory is concerned, some older Windows 7 laptops could be using DDR2, which costs about three times as much as DDR3. This is worth thinking about if you're considering a 64-bit laptop, which can be upgraded beyond 4GB. 64-bit Windows 7 laptops can manage between 8GB and 192GB of memory, depending on which version of Windows 7 you're using. A 32-bit machine will only recognize up to about 3.85GB out of its maximum 4GB.

I'd definitely go for 64-bit, not least because of the memory limit. It's more efficient than 32-bit and although I was a bit wary before I used it, I've not had any trouble. I suppose similar discussions arose back when 32-bit became the norm instead of 16-bit! One of the good things about 64-bit computers, which is mentioned in the above link, is that 32-bit programs can run on 64-bit PCs, although the reverse isn't true.

Cantrel and Madeline, Web User Forums

BROWSERS

Where can I download a safe version of Pale Moon?

Q I wanted to try Pale Moon on my 64-bit Windows 7 PC, but when I tried to install it, I was asked to confirm I was using an "authorized download". I wasn't sure whether it was, so I uninstalled it immediately. Can anyone direct me to a safe download link?

Jah, Web User Forums

A Go to www.palemoon.org and select the Download tab, where you can choose between 32-bit and 64-bit versions of the program. Pale Moon has a page on its website (bit.ly/palemoon349) about avoiding fake versions of the software. Some security programs such as Norton have been a bit iffy about Pale Moon in the past, but I use it as my default browser on three PCs, all running Windows 7, and I think it's excellent. If you have any further questions or difficulties, you can visit the Pale Moon forum (forum.palemoon.org) for help and information.

Madeline, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE

Why can't I edit more images simultaneously in Photoshop?

Q After editing just two or three photographs in Photoshop Elements 12 (bit.ly/photoshop349), I get the message: 'Could not complete your request because there is not enough memory (RAM).' What does that mean?

Jedi, Web User Forums



IrfanView is a free alternative to Photoshop Elements

A Adobe products use a huge amount of memory to process images and videos because every change you make to a picture is stored so you can quickly revert to a previous version if you change your mind during editing. If you've got plenty of memory (minimum 4GB), then make sure you save and close your session when you've finished editing one picture before moving on to the next one. Think about whether you need a program as powerful and memory-hungry as Elements. If you don't, you could switch to a cheap and cheerful editor such as Paint.NET (www.getpaint.net), IrfanView (www.irfanview.com) or Picasa (picasa.google.com).

Greysts, Web User Forums

HARDWARE

How should I clean the inside of my desktop PC?

Q I've been browsing YouTube, looking at videos that tell you how to clean the inside of a desktop PC. Some recommend using a vacuum cleaner while others say this is a definite no-no because of the risk of static build-up. Does anyone have any views on this?

Fossewayfella, Web User Forums



Be careful not to blow dust into the fins of the CPU heatsink

A You certainly should not use a vacuum cleaner – if you take your time, all you really need is a piece of tissue, some cotton buds and a straw for blowing muck out of the nooks and crannies.

The CPU heatsink has to be exposed to clean its fins, but beware not to blow dust into it because it will make your computer overheat and cut out. My tool of choice for cleaning this area is a dry cotton bud – you'll be surprised at what it picks up! You can also clean the CPU fanblades and holder with a damp cotton bud, which will significantly improve air flow.

As for the other areas, always use caution. For the power-supply unit (PSU) and its fans, just give the body a wipe with a paper tissue and try to get into the space at the top, above the PSU, because some residual dust can linger here. Also check the front grilles for blockages and balls of fluff. An old toothbrush is ideal for removing stubborn dirt.

Bedstor and Cantrel, Web User Forums

Inbox

Star Email

£25 winner

Why is it so difficult to contact Google?

Reading your article in Issue 347 (bit.ly/webuser347) about how to remove yourself from Google brings to mind the impossible job of trying to contact the corporation.

I have been trying to get companies to look at my innovation for producing renewable energy, and Google is on my list of people to talk to. Its 'Contact us' page consisted of FAQs, which frankly did not help – you end up going round and round coming back to the same pages. The funny thing is that these pages say Google really wants to help you, and to "contact us soon", but how?

No email address is provided, so, eventually, I went to its "set up an account" page, bluffed my way in and wrote that I had an innovation I would like to show Google. A couple of days later, I got an email back saying: "Thank you for your email. Due to a large volume of messages, there will be a delay in responding to your email. We appreciate your patience during this time. In the meantime, consider posting in our Webmaster Help Forum, where a community of webmasters may be able to help you."



That was dated 27 May and still no reply. I know that Google is busy, but I'm sure it has the technology to reply to emails.

However, it's not just Google – I have found that many websites do the same. It's a counterproductive method of putting people off from complaining or avoiding giving out information, but why? It's the same when you contact a company by phone – they always have a high volume of calls and want you to hold because you are important. Why don't they hire more people to answer the phones? So much for technology – bring back snail mail!

Terry Bradley, Milton Keynes

The trials of cancelling a TalkTalk account

I would like to alert *Web User* readers to my problems with using and leaving TalkTalk. I switched from TalkTalk on 27 February and although the Direct Debit for my broadband account was stopped, the company debited two more payments for a dial-up account I once used for email. I rang TalkTalk on 1 May. An employee assured me he had stopped the Direct Debit for the dial-up account. But in June, TalkTalk demanded a further payment, and said that this employee worked for its residential company, so could not have cancelled my dial-up account, which was classed as business. Customer Services admitted "confusion", but insisted on applying a notice period from June, which meant two more payments. I paid the full amount to avoid compromising my credit record.

I have therefore had to pay TalkTalk a total of £36.20 for a period during which it was not longer my ISP, and during which one of its employees made a serious error. Polite requests for a refund were ignored. Sorting out this problem took several hours of emails and phone calls. I did not even receive the promised email receipt for my final payment.

I should stress that I switched from TalkTalk because my connection kept dropping. I would definitely not recommend this ISP.

Alison Sheppard, via email

What to do with a personal website

Your Group Test of online site builders in Issue 346 (bit.ly/webuser346) made me think it would be good to have my own personal website. The problem is that, although I use my computer in a variety of ways, I simply can't imagine what I might do with my own site. I imagine that other readers will share this same "want of imagination".

May I suggest that *Web User* includes an item in a future issue devoted to this subject which could help enrich the lives of us less imaginative folk?

Francis Reilly, via email



Give cheaper laptops better viewing angles

In response to John Chapman's letter about letterbox laptops in Issue 347, I recently bought a new laptop and I disagree with most of his points. I chose a 1,366 x 768-pixel, 15in screen over a 1,920 x 1,080-pixel one with good reason.

I found 1,920 x 1,080 too high a resolution for a small laptop screen, and some text in some software was so small that it was unreadable. I agree about the aspect ratio being too wide, but that is how it is now with most laptops.

What I don't like is the continuing use of TN (twisted nematic) displays that have very limited viewing angles and glossy screens. I guess the main reason they are used is that they are cheap and produced in vast numbers.

However, there are now IPS (in-plane switching) displays with much better viewing angles. One assumes this is mainly down to price. However, only

You can let us know your views and opinions via:
webuser@dennis.co.uk, www.facebook.com/webusermagazine, www.twitter.com/webusermagazine and forum.webuser.co.uk

more expensive laptops seem to have them. It's about time manufacturers produced these screens cheaply and in vast numbers.

Helmut, Web User Forums

Web User's new look

Thank you for your feedback about the changes we introduced in Issue 348. Here is a selection of your comments

The new look is much fresher and I like the choice of various hues of sky blue for emphasis. Well done to the layout artists. Really easy on the eye!

Papi11on, Web User Forums

I was surprised at how different it looks with the excellent layout and design. Moving the Inbox section to the back pages appeals to me – it just seems to belong there. Even Robert has been given a makeover on page three – he looks younger! Great job all round.

George, Web User Forums

I like the new look of *Web User* very much. Although I wasn't keen on the new logo when I first saw it, it looks just right once you actually see it on the front cover. Well done to all concerned!

Madeline, Web User Forums

Good idea to give it a new look while retaining the usual features that we all like. *Web User* is getting on a bit age-wise – I remember the mag way back in 2001. A lot has changed since then, so it's good to have a fresh modern internet mag that we can all relate to.

Awam7, Web User Forums

I like the new layout of the magazine. It somehow seems more substantial.

Lynn Sharpe, Twitter

Love the new look better than I thought and it's really packed to the max with everything.

Shawn Adams, Facebook

Liking the new look and layout, but missing the crossword. Please bring it back.

Alan Walker, Facebook

That crossword was a waste of space. Crossword books don't have web-using pages. I'm glad you've dispensed with it.

Ron Hughes, via email

What you say...

Google Glass is now available in the UK for £1,000. How much would you be willing to pay?

£100 maybe. It's not exactly a fetching design. You can't look good wearing it.

Dale Taylor

Around the £200 mark, bearing in mind how limited its use is. I can't understand why it's so expensive. Google is making a killing.

Stephen Perry

£200 for sure. Get it down to the price of smartwatches currently on sale.

Joe Cowell

£299, £349 at a push. I would pony up £1,000 right now, but the missus would kill me.

Derek Murray

It's another gadget that people will be mugged for. I can also see a lot of places barring people who wear them.

Martin James

Do you agree with the Government's plan to force networks to share their phone masts in low-signal areas?

I think it's a great idea but there may be practical problems. For example, if it's an O2 mast and the O2 customers are crowded out by other networks' customers. Maybe there's a technical way round this?

Ian Phipps

I'm concerned that they will reduce investment into growing (possibly even maintaining) the network because they will rely on other networks to pick up the slack. It's not a good thing in the long run.

Bruce Lauderdale

Makes sense. No point in all the networks spending a lot to build coverage in remote spots. Better for them to agree different regions to concentrate on and share the signal.

Chris Armstrong

Will your next watch be a smartwatch?

Depends on its functionality. It is going to be difficult to reinvent the watch because the current trend is to make screens bigger. Style over substance.

Chris Walsh

Nope. I need my watch to tell me the time, and that's it.

Colin Wallace

Yes, though I'm waiting for the Moto 360, which will run Android Wear (bit.ly/moto349). It looks amazing.

Greg Talt

Certainly not. I would only end up breaking it or covering it in paint.

Paul Wallace

I don't need a watch. I have a phone, a computer and a collection of clocks.

Sarah Cooper

Do you agree with streamed songs being included in the top 40 charts (bit.ly/charts349)?

Why not? The Top 40 was probably fixed in the past so at least this will open it up and give a lot more artists a reasonable chance of chart exposure.

Kevin Rivers

Well, the charts are worth diddly squat these days, so why not?

Adam Law

No, it should be a separate category.

Paul Steel

Does anyone actually care what is at the top of the charts these days except the artists?

James Davis-Mann

Big Dilemma

Barry Collins has always got an opinion on technology. Here he solves your web and PC predicaments



Should I buy a touchscreen laptop?

Q **I plan to buy a new laptop, but I see they're available in touchscreen and standard varieties. I've always used a keyboard and mouse, and I'm not really comfortable with touching the screen, so should I stick with what I know?**

Brian Kelsey, Sunderland



Illustration: Andrew Torrens

A This is, without a doubt, the question I am asked most often in my unpaid role as chief technical adviser to friends and family, and one that I always give the same answer to.

First, a proviso. My answer assumes you're not buying a Mac, because Apple regards touchscreen laptops as the work of the devil and plain refuses to sell you one. More fool them. But for everyone else, my answer is an unequivocal "yes".

I've been using a touchscreen laptop for around a year now and I can't ever imagine going back. Whether it's pressing those big 'Play' buttons on BBC iPlayer videos, scrolling through photos on Facebook or dismissing a pop-up, a finger tap is usually the fastest method. These touch controls have become such second nature that when I have to use a laptop with an ordinary screen, I constantly find myself dabbing at the screen like a demented chimp, trying to drag downwards to scroll through websites or press the Send button on emails.

I originally resisted switching to a touchscreen laptop for two reasons that turned out to be completely unfounded. First, I absolutely hate fingerprints on my screen, and would give anyone who even threatened to touch my monitor the death stare every time they put their mitts near it. However, the fingerprint-resistant coating on most laptops works well enough, provided you don't swipe your screen straight after demolishing a bag of Monster Munch.

> "Don't swipe your screen straight after demolishing a bag of Monster Munch"

Second, I was worried that image quality would suffer, because PC touchscreens used to have a mottled effect that looked like your screen has been sprayed with a fine mist. But today's touchscreens are much improved, and don't suffer from the poor viewing angles that afflicted older models.

Windows 8.1, which is now pretty much obligatory on any new Windows laptop, is clearly designed for touchscreen use, with its big, finger-friendly tiles on the Start screen and an ever-expanding range of apps that work better with touch than with a keyboard and mouse. Although most Desktop apps are still almost impossible to use with the touchscreen alone, I often find myself pinching the screen to zoom in on a photo or document, or pressing large icons with my finger, simply because it's more convenient than finding the slider or moving the mouse.

Even if you hate Windows 8.1 and all it stands for (and I'm sure many *Web User* readers would rather agree to heart surgery from Dale Winton than install Windows 8.1), I'd still recommend opting for touch. Work is already underway on Windows 9 and it will inevitably deliver a refinement of the touchscreen interface. Microsoft has a history of taking two or three attempts to get its software right, so if it nails touchscreen technology in its next version, it would be frustrating not to have the hardware to take advantage of it. Even if you don't yet use touch, there are no disadvantages to keeping your options open.

Email your Big Dilemma questions to Barry at webuser@dennis.co.uk

+ Do you agree? Let us know at forum.webuser.co.uk

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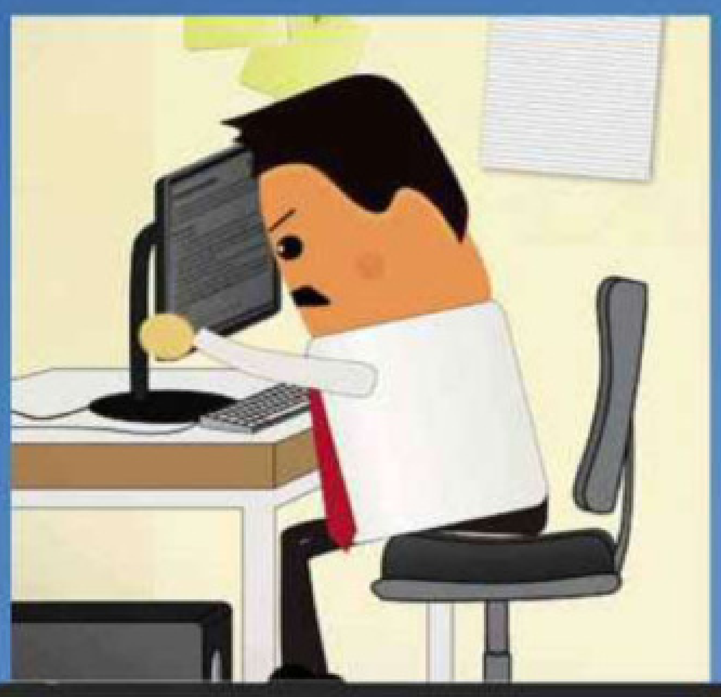
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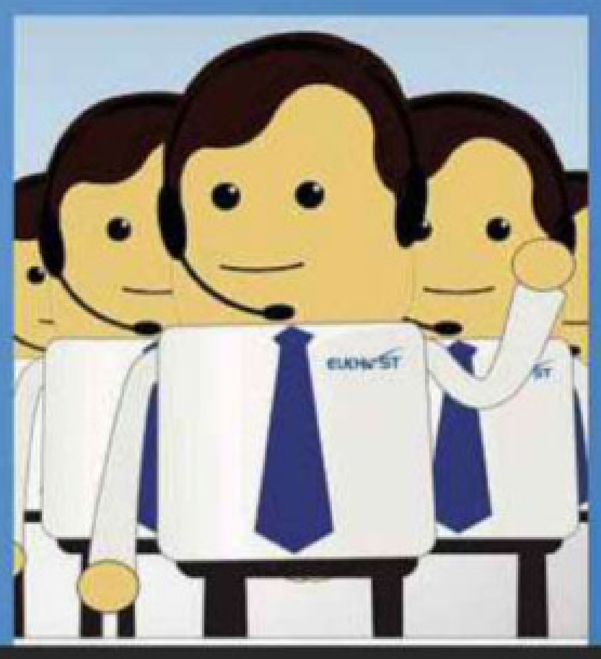
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